



2,902

## Disappearing act

The magician who vanished

Section Two

## Free Ski Pass

plus ski holidays to be won

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## Cezanne comes to the Tate

The making of a blockbuster

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# Half Britain's schools fail to make grade

Inspector blames trendy teaching

JUDITH JUDD  
Education Editor

Half of Britain's primary schools and 40 per cent of secondary schools are failing their pupils, according to a damning report by Chris Woodhead, the government's chief inspector, who blames trendy teaching methods for lowering standards.

Labour described the figures as a "very serious indictment" of the Government's education policies, while Gillian Shephard, the Secretary of State for Education, immediately announced that she would publish this year's league tables for primary schools.

Mr Woodhead says in his annual report published yesterday that schools urgently need to tackle mediocre standards in literacy and numeracy, and teaching in about 20 per cent of lessons was poor.

He also questions the prevalent assumption of teachers for the last 25 years that children should be taught as individuals or in small groups. "I am not saying that whole class teaching should be the only method used but there should be more of it," Mr Woodhead said.

Mrs Shephard defended the Government against the charge that 17 years of Conservative rule had failed to raise school standards by pointing to a series of reforms from regular inspection to national tests.

The report, based on 4,000 inspections, follows last week's national test results when half 11-year-olds failed to reach the expected standards.

Mrs Shephard said the test results and Mr Woodhead's report showed schools must be

made fully accountable, adding: "Schools should set targets for their own improvement. The messages in the report are ones which every teacher can - and should - think long and hard about."

David Blunkett, Labour's education spokesman, said: "This report is a very serious indictment of the failure of the Government to raise standards



in primary schools. There is a real problem which must now be tackled as a matter of urgency."

Mr Woodhead said there was much good news to celebrate in schools, with most lessons rated satisfactory or better, but there were still unacceptable wide variations between different schools' achievement.

"The most successful secondary schools achieve GCSE results twice as good as others in similar socio-economic circumstances and six times better than those achieved by the least successful in the less favoured areas," he said.

His Office for Standards in Education estimates that there are 15,000 bad teachers - about 3 per cent - and 48,000 first-rate ones.

Teaching is worst for seven- to 11-year-olds because some teachers do not have a good grasp of their subject. Standards are too low among 11 to 14-year-olds because schools use their weakest teachers for this age group. Teachers needed to make more use of traditional methods such as phonics in teaching reading, he said.

Teaching methods are not good enough in nearly half primary schools and one-third of secondaries, the report says. One primary school in seven urgently needs to concentrate on spelling and handwriting as well as creativity.

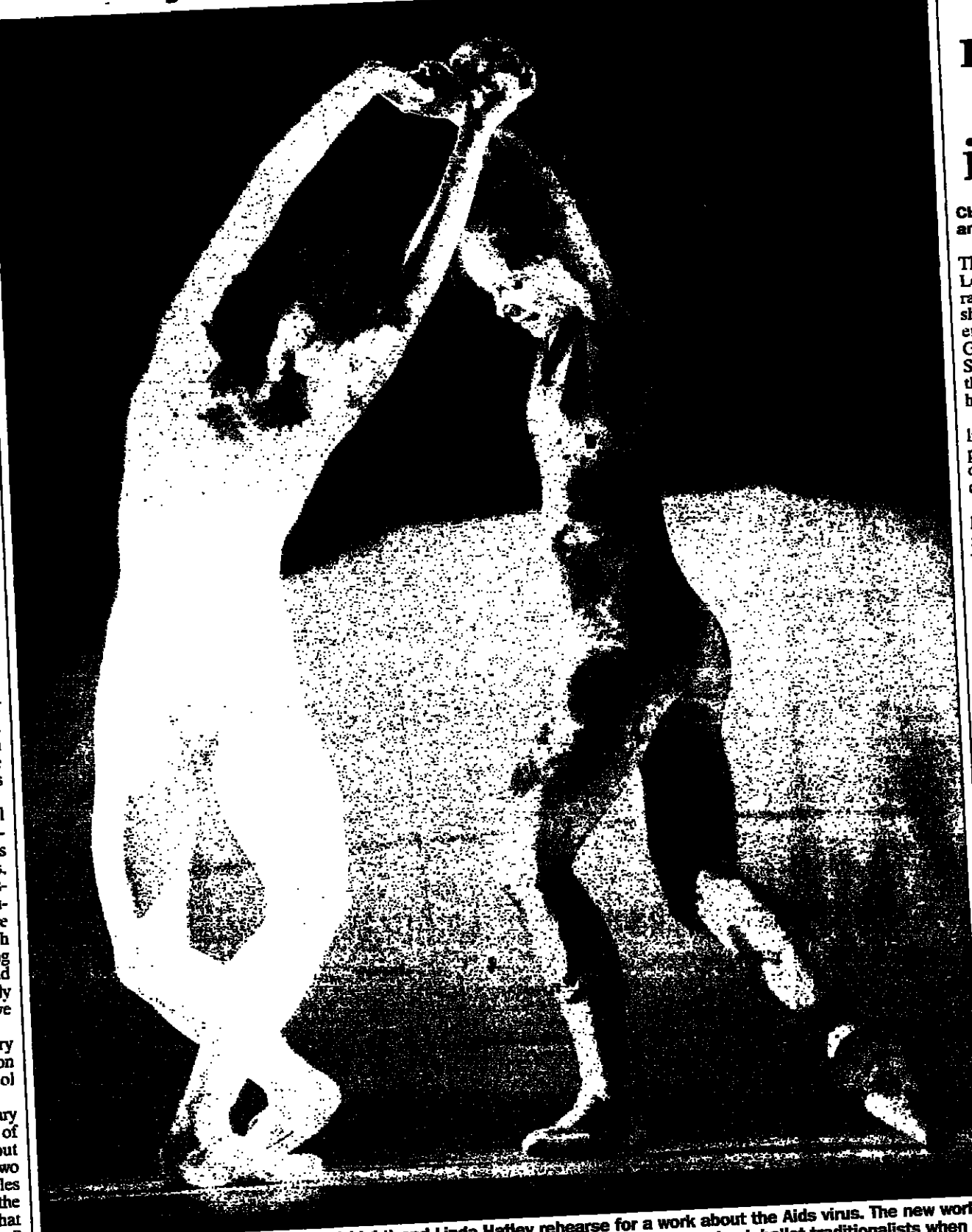
Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters' Union of Women Teachers, said: "It is wrong and simplistic to blame the failure exclusively on teachers: there are other deep-seated causes such as disruptive children, uncaring and unco-operative parents and curriculum overload. Merely sacking teachers will not solve the problem."

Teachers were also angry about Mrs Shephard's decision to publish primary school league tables next year.

David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, pointed out that Mrs Shephard said only two weeks ago that league tables would not be published until the tests had "bedded down". That could not be the case until 1997 at the earliest.

Books shortage, page 6  
Leading article, page 18

## Darcey takes a dance with death



Final steps: Ballerinas Darcey Russell (right) and Linda Hatley rehearse for a work about the Aids virus. The new work, entitled *Dances with Death*, is set to music by Benjamin Britten and is expected to shock ballet traditionalists when it opens at London's Covent Garden this week.  
Photograph: Laurie Lewis

## Fraud puts rail line sell-off in doubt

CHRISTIAN WOLMAR  
and COLIN BROWN

The future of the privatised London, Tilbury and Southend rail line, looked increasingly shaky last night after a manager was suspended and Sir George Young, the Transport Secretary, said in Parliament that the franchise process may have to be reopened.

Yesterday, Ian Burton, the line's retail manager, was suspended on full pay after the commercial director, Colin Andrews, resigned on Saturday.

Chris Kinchin-Smith, the head of Enterprise Rail, the management buyout team which made the successful bid, said "it was not appropriate for Mr Burton to carry out his duties, some involving passenger safety, while at the same time fully assisting with the investigation."

Sir George confirmed to MPs that the option of inviting a fresh round of tenders for the line was being reviewed by the franchising director, Roger Salmon, and would depend on the outcome of the investigations into irregularities in the LTS management.

Sir George's statement, however, appeared to contradict Mr Salmon who at a ceremony earlier in the day to mark the letting of the two first franchises, South West Trains and Great Western, said: "It was an isolated incident of someone being too clever."

Clare Short, Labour's shadow transport secretary, said the management team should not be allowed to run the service because, if the allegations were true, they had been shown to be corrupt.

The letting of the franchise to the management team was halted within hours of the planned transfer on Saturday night by Sir George after it was revealed that managers at the company had moved tickets

TURN TO PAGE TWO

# Minister gave lobbyist Commons pass

CHRIS BLACKHURST  
Westminster Correspondent

A government Minister arranged for a lobbyist who represented several large defence contractors to have free access around the House of Commons as his research assistant.

Despite the fact that Barry Joseph has not worked for Richard Page, junior minister at the Department of Trade and Industry, for more than a year, Mr Page sponsored the renewal of his Commons pass last May, three months after he joined the Government.

A research assistant's pass allows Mr Joseph to freely enter the Commons, circulate among MPs and ministers in the bars, restaurants and corridors, use the library and obtain published Parliamentary papers.

In his report last year on standards in public life, Lord Nolan voiced concerns about ties between MPs and lobbyists. Last night Labour called for an inquiry by the Serjeant-at-Arms, the senior Commons official who issues passes. Dale Campbell-Savours, MP for Wokingham, was writing to the Prime Minister about the affair.

Mr Page, MP for Hertfordshire South West, has responsibility at the DTI for small businesses, industry and energy. He has access to ministerial briefings, participates in top-level departmental discussions and receives advance notice of forthcoming Government announcements.

According to the Commons computer, Mr Joseph's pass is due to expire on 1 May this year. It was renewed for 12 months on 2 May last year. The lobbyist works for British Aerospace, Racal and Rolls-Royce.

Mr Joseph said he had assisted Mr Page before he became a minister last February, when he was a member of the Commons Public Accounts Committee. Mr Joseph said that when Mr Page became a minister, he suggested Mr Joseph would be able to help with press work in his constituency. "He renewed my application believing I could do some work for him." That did not materialise, said Mr Joseph, and sometime in the middle of last year, the pass was returned.

The Commons pass office yesterday had no record of the pass having been returned.

Mr Page said that Mr Joseph "used to do research when I was on the PAC. He was knowledgeable on defence and military things and he did research for me." Asked if he knew Mr Joseph worked for Rolls-Royce and BAE, he said: "He's an adviser to them, yes." The minister said he had "no idea" why he had renewed Mr Joseph's pass. "I have not used him since I have been a minister."

Mr Joseph said he could not remember exactly when the pass was returned but thought it was in the middle of last year.

Background, page 2



Richard Page: Gave lobbyist privileged Commons access

# Restaurants soak up a 1,000 per cent profit on water sales

PETER VICTOR

Restaurants are making up to 1,000 per cent profit by selling customers bottles of filtered tap water. Restaurateurs have discovered a new water filter system called Classic Crystal and are using it to treat tap water - which is then bottled and sold to customers at hugely inflated prices.

Classic Crystal, which costs between 10p and 20p a bottle to produce, is on sale at restaurants for anything up to £2.80. Well-known restaurants selling the water include the People's Palace at the Royal Festival Hall, in London, and other outlets ranging from Groucho Club, London, to The

Rock hotel restaurant in Gibraltar.

The *Egon Ronay Guide* says that the practice is a disgrace, although not illegal, and states that all restaurants should provide fresh tap water for free as a matter of course.

Bottled mineral water is also being sold at exaggerated prices, sometimes as much as £7.50 a bottle, an investigation by the BBC has found.

Egon Ronay described this practice as "highway robbery". He added: "This water pricing is a logical consequence of the warped wine pricing policy that exists in Britain - which is totally idiotic and counter-productive."

"The percentage mark-up

on wine is so high that customers are prevented from buying good wine. But London water is poor quality to taste. It is important to have good water with one's food."

A spokesman for the Restaurateurs' Association said last night that in some circumstances the high prices charged for water are justified. "The margin that we place on mineral water often has to be higher than on other products," he said.

The spokesman added: "People are drinking less alcohol than they did four or five years ago - especially at lunchtime - and we have to make an additional profit in order to cover our costs."

The row over the water is featured tonight on BBC2's *Food and Drink* programme.

However, John Shirley-Bevan, the managing director of Classic Crystal Sparkling Water, which is based in Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire, said he was dubious about claims of a 1,000 per cent mark-up on tap water.

"I don't know where they get that figure from," he said. "The other thing is that we do not dictate what our product should be sold for."

"It depends on the restaurant - whether they are a high turnover place with lots of covers in a night, or a one-cover evening with waiters in bow ties."

## IN BRIEF

### Giant step for stores chief

Stephen Hinchliffe (right), owner of Salisbury's Sock Shop, Contessa and Oakland Menswear, yesterday became one of Britain's top high street retailers when his private company, Facia, bought the Saxe and Curless shoe shops. Facia now has 860 branches. No price was disclosed for the deal, but it is thought Mr Hinchliffe paid up to £4m for the 134 Saxe and Curless branches. Page 20

### Buddha's birthplace

The dispute over whereabouts the Buddha was born 2,000 years ago may have been solved by archaeologists. Page 3



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### Threat to cricket

Cricket's World Cup was in chaos last night after Australia and the West Indies threatened not to play their games in Sri Lanka after last week's bomb attack in Colombo that killed more than 60. Page 28

### Today's weather

Rain, snow and sleet heading east across Britain. Section Two, page 25

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## news

## IN BRIEF

## Attorney General to rule on Child Z

In a case with crucial implications for the freedom of the press, the Attorney General has been asked to consider whether newspapers are allowed to report a Commons Early Day Motion if it breaches a High Court injunction.

A blanket injunction was granted in March 1993 restraining the media from identifying or seeking information relating to a child, who can only be referred to as Z. Last year, however, the child's mother sought leave to allow her to publish the treatment that her child is receiving at a specialised institution, and the Court of Appeal ruled that it was not in the child's interests for a film to be broadcast identifying her.

Ten days ago an MP put down an Early Day Motion which urged the daughter. Several newspapers reported it and the Attorney General has been asked to consider whether they are in contempt of court.

## Ashdown libel case

Paddy Ashdown announced yesterday that he is suing the Bristol-based *Western Daily Press* for libel. The Liberal Democrat leader, who has been the target of a hate campaign, said that published an "utterly disgraceful article". The subject of the allegations are matters which will be the subject of court proceedings later this week.

## Charity scratchcards

Four leading charities - Age Concern, Cancer Research Campaign, Scope and the NSPCC - launched their own scratchcard in an attempt to make up the income shortfall they have suffered since the start of the National Lottery. Tickets are available at post offices.

## Child bride's return

Sarah Cook, the 13-year-old child bride from Essex, left the Turkish village of Kahramanmaraş with her mother Jackie last night to await the first flight home. A Foreign Office spokesman said they were expected back "in the next 24 hours".

## £1.4m damages

A boy who suffered catastrophic brain damage because of medical blunders was awarded £1.4m damages at the High Court in London. Barry Hawkins, now aged 13, was transferred to Aldershot's Cambridge Military Maternity Hospital soon after his premature birth in 1982, but staff failed to ventilate or monitor him properly, leading to oxygen starvation. The Ministry of Defence admitted liability.

## Fat cat sacked

A cat kept by a hospital to sit on patients' laps as part of their therapy needs a new home because it has become too fat. The cat, named Marmite, weighs 2 stone - three times the weight of the average family cat - and Knowle Hospital, near Southampton, says patients are finding the animal too heavy.

## Correction

A quotation was attributed in the *Independent* yesterday to John Ward MP. Mr Ward did not use those words, nor do they represent his views.

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## Lobbyist eases his way into the corridors of power

CHRIS BLACKHURST  
Westminster Correspondent

Barry Joseph is well-known in the defence lobbying industry. Operating as a one-man band, he gives an office address in Lamb Street, near Liverpool Street station in the City.

Clients include British Aerospace, Racal and Rolls-Royce, who are currently bidding for billion-pound government contracts.

As a parliamentary adviser,

## Commons access: Row over prized passes shows how advisers hope to gain influence for clients

Mr Joseph would be expected to brief the companies on developments at Westminster likely to affect their businesses, to keep them informed of intelligence gleaned from ministers, officials and political journalists and to press their case.

A key part of a lobbyist's work is gaining access to min-

isters and MPs able to influence key decisions. Having entry to the Commons and being able to rub shoulders with ministers, MPs and journalists would be a key selling-point for any political adviser.

This is not the first time the system of granting Commons passes has been questioned.

People applying for passes are security-vetted by the office of the Serjeant-at-Arms. In 1987, a research assistant to a left-wing Labour MP had his pass withdrawn for being a suspected IRA sympathiser.

In 1989, Pamela Bordes, a former model, was found to have a research assistant's pass

provided by a Tory MP and Dale Campbell-Savours, MP for Worthing, complained security passes were being handed round "like confetti".

A Tory MP last year withdrew his research assistant's pass after he was charged with distributing paedophile literature.

Racal is part of a consortium competing for the £2bn defence field telecommunications order, expected to be announced this summer. A Racal spokesman said that Mr Joseph

was "retained as a parliamentary communications consultant. He is a consultant to us as he is to other people".

Asked if Mr Joseph was working on the field telecoms order, the Racal spokesman replied: "DFTS is a project we're bidding for. Barry Joseph is aware of that as an adviser to us." The Racal spokesman said that as far as he knew, Mr Joseph operated from the Commons. "He works for himself in the House of Commons."

British Aerospace was advised by Mr Joseph on last year's ferocious contest for the new army attack helicopter. BAE is now pitching for three Government missile orders, together worth £2bn. A BAE spokesman said that Mr Joseph was employed as "an overall consultant".

In the register of interests of MPs' research assistants, Mr Joseph declares "occasional work for BAE and Rolls-Royce".

## New knife curb to ban sale to under-16s

JASON BENNETTO  
Crime Correspondent

People aged under 16 are to be banned from buying knives, the Government has decided. The move is part of the clampdown on what police believe is a growing knife culture in Britain - highlighted by the stabbing to death of London headmaster Philip Lawrence.

New laws to ban the sale of knives will be added to the Offensive Weapons Bill, which has all-party backing and is currently going through Parliament.

The Government is expected to announce the change on Friday.

Once the Bill becomes law it will be illegal for shopkeepers to sell knives to under-16-year-olds. They are already barred from selling cigarettes and glue to youngsters. At present there are no age restrictions on buying knives.

Kitchen knives, daggers, combat-style blades, and "survival" weapons are among those expected to be covered under the new regulations. Ministers still have to decide on the wording of the new legislation and whether all knives will come under the ban. The changes will be added as amendments to the Bill in the next few weeks.

It is understood that the Home Office would also like to introduce restrictions on the sale and advertisements of knives via mail order catalogues, however this appears unlikely because of the difficulties in enforcing any new laws.

Tim Kirkhope, Home Office Minister, has already spoken out against children buying "razor-sharp kitchen knives or commando-style daggers".

The Offensive Weapons Bill, which is to be renamed, will increase the maximum penalty from six months to a two-year jail sentence or an unlimited fine for carrying a knife without good reason. The maximum sentence for carrying an offensive weapon such as a cosh or knuckleduster would also go up from two to four years.

There has been increasing concern about the growing availability of knives and the apparent increasing willingness of people to use them during attacks.

More than 37,000 knives were surrendered last month in an amnesty in England and Wales. Of the 677 murders in this country in 1994, 236 were stabbings.

The Bill, which was introduced by Conservative MP Lady Olga Maitland, was brought in the wake of the fatal stabbing of Mr Lawrence, who was murdered outside his school.

The Association of Chief Police Officers supports a ban on the sale of knives to children, although there is concern about the practicalities of trying to enforce the law.

Last month Sir Paul Condon, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, told the Home Affairs Select Committee that he would welcome any restriction on the sale of knives to young people.

"There is a growing willingness by young people to carry knives... as part of a street culture," he said.

In 1985 London saw a peak of 2,758 knife offences committed by adults and young people. By 1993 the figure had fallen to 2,332 but last year the authorities saw it rise again to 2,550.



Focus of devotion: Restorer Hamish Dewar examines the *Light of the World*, a Victorian masterpiece by William Holman Hunt, at Christie's yesterday; it will be returned to St Paul's Cathedral later this year. Photograph: Edward Sykes

## Fraud poses serious threat to London rail line sell-off

## FROM PAGE ONE

from one station to another in order to boost the share of LTS's income. Tickets issued at Fenchurch Street were sold at a greater proportion of the revenue from Travelcard sales, which has to be shared with London Transport. Yesterday it emerged that there were plans to extend the scheme to Barking, which would have resulted in doubling the extra annual revenue to over £1m.

There were also signs that the City backers of the team - the venture capital groups Gresham Trust and 3i - might withdraw should the investigations being carried out by BR and by

the Rail Regulator, John Swift QC, reveal that the fraud was known about widely in the company. A spokesman for 3i said: "We are waiting for the outcome of the investigations."

A City source said: "This is the last thing that a company like 3i wants. They are very careful about investing in companies with ethical management teams. They would never, for example, back an individual nursing home through fear that abuse allegations may be raised. And they hate getting their names in the papers over something like this."

British Rail is investigating why the LTS management did not know about the fraud which

had netted £45,000 over a six-week period. A BR source told the *Independent*: "There were monthly meetings to discuss the finances of the company and the figures must have shown that extra revenue was coming in from Travelcard income." He pointed out that at least 30 ticket clerks and other staff must have known of the fraud.

LT managers are extremely worried about the incident because Travelcard tickets are sold throughout the BR network and LT has dealings with all 25 Train Operating Companies. They say that similar frauds could arise in other parts of rail network, particularly in London.

## FCO's top woman to join former boss at NatWest

## POLLY TOYNBEE

Dame Pauline Neville-Jones, until recently second highest official in the Foreign Office and the Prime Minister's chief foreign affairs adviser, is leaving to join NatWest Markets, the investment banking arm of NatWest Group.

Although it has not yet been publicly announced, she will be joining her former Foreign Secretary, Douglas Hurd.

He has been a director of the bank and deputy chairman of NatWest Markets since October, with a salary of £250,000 for a two-day week, "providing services of a promotional or ambassadorial nature". As final arrangements for her move

have not been completed, details of Dame Pauline's new job have yet to be revealed.

The move follows a raucous dispute in the upper echelons of the Foreign Office. Dame Pauline, 56, was expected to be made ambassador to Paris, having recently left the position of Political Director, number two to the permanent Under Secretary, Sir John Coles. The Paris embassy is traditionally given to the most senior official as a last post before compulsory retirement at 60.

Friends of Dame Pauline say she was unfairly treated by the Foreign Office, cheated of this last honour after a distinguished career. She was passed over by

Michael Jay, a man six years her junior. She is the highest ranking woman ever in the Foreign Office, a department that lags behind the rest in promoting women. Only 1 per cent of the top three grades at the Foreign Office are women, far fewer than the average for all Whitehall departments, where women hold 8.5 per cent of top posts.

Promoted to Political Director by the Prime Minister in 1994, Dame Pauline travelled with him on foreign trips and was his chief foreign affairs adviser. She was also Britain's chief negotiator on Bosnia, and signatory to the peace accords signed at Dayton, Ohio.

News analysis, page 17

## MPs to face 'fast track' scrutiny over pay

DONALD MACINTYRE  
Political Editor

The Senior Salaries Review Board - the body which fixes the pay of the most senior civil servants - is expected to carry out a fast-track inquiry into the sensitive issue of MPs' pay, in time to report this June.

Negotiations between the main political parties were being finalised last night, ahead of an expected announcement today that the issue will be examined by the board, which already has a remit to report on parliamentary pay.

In a concession to more than 300 MPs, of all parties, who wanted Lord Nolan's committee on standards in public life to investigate the issue, the terms of reference are expected to allow for the board to consult with Lord Nolan on how pay could be affected by the new curbs on outside interests approved by the Commons last year.

The inquiry will cover not only salaries (currently £34,000 a year) but also secretarial and office allowances (currently £42,754 a year) and pensions. In addition, it will cover ministerial salaries in the light of complaints that they are underpaid, especially after having £10,000 of their MP's salary "docked" in measure taken by Lady Thatcher when she was Prime Minister, the issue of ministers' pay was highlighted by the unexpected resignation of Tim Eggar, the Minister of State for energy, who is to pursue a career in the private sector.

The use of the Senior Salaries Review Board will excite expectations among some MPs that they could be lifted into a new salary league. Previously, MPs were linked to Grade 6 of the civil service, but the Review Board covers only Grades above Grade 5 - paid around £10,000 a year more than the old Grade Six.

An early report - before the general election and probably before the summer recess - would mean that outgoing MPs, many of whom have signed the Early Day Motion, would benefit from any improvement in pension arrangements.

Leaders of all parties have apparently agreed to get the announcement on MPs' pay out of the way before Thursday's announcement of next year's pay awards for over 1.3m public sector workers. These are expected to be about four per cent.

Meanwhile, anger has surfaced among MPs at the adverse publicity given to suggestions that some could be seeking to double their salaries. In response to a question from Bob Farry, the left-wing Labour MP for Liverpool Riverside, Tony Newton, Leader of the Commons, said he had no plans to require lobby journalists to declare "their salaries, employers' pension contributions, and allowances" in return for retaining Commons accreditation.

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## Man dies as snow brings chaos

PETER VICTOR

Blizzard conditions caused chaos on the roads in Scotland and Wales yesterday with drifts up to 12 inches deep, leading to at least one death, and snow is expected to spread across Britain today.

Slippery roads and poor visibility made driving hazardous north of the border and mountain passes in Scotland and Wales have been closed.

A postman was killed in a road crash in heavy snow as blizzards swept across parts of Wales. Andrew John, 30, died in the crash between his van and a four-wheel-drive jeep on the A40 near Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire.

The worst-affected region was Dumfries and Galloway, where AA Roadwatch described the roads as "extremely treacherous" and police have advised motorists only to make journeys that are necessary.

More than 100 Scottish schools were closed because of



Winter wonderland: A flock of wild geese search for a landing strip to feed after heavy snow fell in Scotland yesterday, leaving some roads, particularly in the mountain regions, impassible

the deteriorating weather. In South Wales, thousands of pupils were sent home early as blizzards swept the region.

Mid-Glamorgan was reported to be worst affected with snow shutting all schools in the

Rhondda Valley. By midday yesterday, several roads in the Scottish Grampian mountains: the Horseshoe Pass in Clywd, and the Rhigos, Bwlch, Maerdy and Llanwanno mountain roads in Mid-Glamorgan were im-

passible. More routes across Scotland, Wales and Cumbria were expected to be cut off last night as conditions worsened over the evening. Minor roads throughout the North and West and the Midlands became icy,

making driving very difficult. Many rural roads in parts of Dyfed, Powys and Clywd were also hit by snow piled up by strong winds.

Weathermen warned that up to eight inches of snow on high

ground was expected overnight. A London Weather Centre forecaster said: "With strong southerly and south-easterly winds, there will be drifting and blizzard conditions in the mountains. The snow is going

to move east across almost all of England and Wales, though it may not reach East Anglia. Coastal areas in the South and West will see rain rather than snow. "It will not be particularly cold - around freezing in most

places - but there will be strong winds, making it feel a lot colder than it is," the forecaster said. While it will be wintry and cold for the rest of the week, storms are expected to have blown themselves out by today.

## Tariffs slashed in new mobile phone battle

PETER RODGERS  
Business Editor

Cellnet yesterday stepped up a price war in the mobile phones business by introducing new tariffs that it claimed would reduce charges to customers by as much as 30 per cent.

The move is part of a battle for market share among the fast-growing operators of digital mobile phones, prompted by the rapid growth of Orange over the last two years.

Cellnet, one of the first two companies in the field, operates both the older analogue phones and the more secure and better quality digital phones which are sweeping the market for new users.

Following aggressive new tariffs introduced recently by Orange, Cellnet said it was cutting its digital tariffs, increasing the length of off-peak periods and replacing charges by the minute

with one second charging. Payment by the second allows customers to keep costs down by making brief calls.

Cellnet and its rival Vodafone dominate the mobile phone market but have far more analogue than digital customers.

Orange, which sells only digital phones, claims only 7 per cent of the total market but said last month that it was winning 30 per cent of the 100,000 new digital customers who come into the market every month.

Orange also said that there were now twice as many new customers for digital phones in the UK as a whole every month as for analogue equipment.

The claims were made when the company, owned by Hutchison Whampoa, the Hong Kong conglomerate, and British Aerospace, announced a £2.8bn stock market flotation.

The decision to raise money

on the stock market is thought to be one of the factors behind the aggressive marketing campaigns that are now bringing a drop in costs for all users.

Howard Ford, the managing director of Cellnet, said: "Today's announcement is good news for Cellnet's customers and those considering a mobile phone, and bad news for our competitors who assumed they could compete on price alone."

One-second billing is to be applied to digital phone calls, where all peak-time calls are to be reduced by 5p a minute. Off-peak calls for medium level users are similarly reduced.

The Call Saver monthly subscription is to be reduced by £5 for high users, who will also benefit from an extra 24 hours a week of off-peak periods.

The changes, from 1 March, also allow low-usage analogue users to switch to digital, at no extra charge.

## Stone points to Buddha's birth site

TIM MCGIRK  
New Delhi

For centuries, pilgrims searching the Himalayan foothills for the birthplace of Lord Buddha were sent in two contrary directions: India and Nepal. But now the dispute over where the Buddha was born 2,000 years ago may have been solved.

Archaeologists have discovered a stone which marks the Buddha's birthplace under an ancient temple in south-western Nepal.

Archaeologists from Nepal, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Japan unearthed the evidence nine months ago, but the Nepali authorities delayed making the announcement until more experts had been consulted. Nepal's Prime Minister, Sher Bahadur Deuba, said on Sunday: "The discovery proves that Lord Buddha was born at this sacred place."

Relics were excavated from a chamber 16ft under the Mayadevi temple in Lumbini, 200 miles south-west of Nepal's capital, Kathmandu, which ar-



chaeologists say proves that this was where Buddha was born.

Buddhism has 300 million followers around the world, mainly in Asia, who know by heart the story of how Buddha was born while his mother, Queen Mayadevi, was travelling towards her parents' home in Rangram, located in Nepal's Nawalparasi district, when she felt birth pains. Passing through Lumbini, she went into labour, bathed in a sacred pond and then walked 25 paces into a grove of trees to deliver her child. Buddhists believe that the baby sprang out and miraculously took seven steps.

Nepali officials claim that a commemorative stone was found exactly 25 steps from the pond. Lok Darshan Bajracharya, former chairman of the Lumbini Development Trust, said: "It proves the authenticity of the descriptions given in Buddhist literature and religious texts about the exact spot where the Lord was born."

Some scholars, however, had insisted that Buddha was born across the Indian border in

what is now the eastern part of Uttar Pradesh state. Buddhists believe that Buddha, or Prince Siddhartha Gautama as he was known, was destined by soothsayers to become either a great ruler or, if he were to witness great suffering, a religious leader.

His princely father wanted him to become a conqueror and tried to shield his son from life's ills. But the young prince slipped out of the palace one day and realised for the first time the reality of suffering, old age, sickness and death. Aged 29, he renounced his family and fled his palace. As a wandering beggar, he searched far and long for the truth, and most of the places where he gave his sermons are located in what is now India.

The stone marking the Buddha's birthplace in Lumbini was found atop a layered brick platform dating back to the era of Emperor Ashoka, who visited Lumbini nearly 400 years after Queen Maya walked from the sacred pond into the forest and delivered her son.

## Hotels warned over Euro 96 'profiteering'

CLARE GARNER

Hoteliers who have hiked up their prices to make a fast buck out of the Euro 96 soccer tournament are being investigated by the Football Association.

English officials have launched an inquiry into how hotels in cities hosting this summer's sporting event have inflated their prices - sometimes by as much as four times the "rack rates".

One city centre hotel which normally charges £40 for a night of bed and breakfast is reportedly asking £160 for the same room - without breakfast.

Host cities - London, Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, Sheffield, Newcastle, Nottingham and Liverpool - are expecting as many as 250,000 visitors from the 16 qualifying countries, generating up to £118m in tourism revenue during the three-week tournament. But the FA fears the mega-inflationary rates will mean hoteliers prove to be the ultimate losers.

Manchester alone is expecting 50,000 visitors - but the city has only 28,000 beds. Not sur-

prisingly, it is emerging as one of the most expensive host cities. Its Britannia Hotel is charging £180 for a double room and £140 for a single compared to the published tariffs, posted at reception, of £105 and £75 respectively, the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza is charging £150 for a double room instead of the rack rate of £120.

David Davies, the FA's rector of public affairs, appealed to hoteliers to rethink "What we are seeking is a football festival that reflects nothing but credit on this country. Frankly, hotels which exploit guests are letting everyone down," he said yesterday.

Michele Aboddy, National Accounts Manager for Manchester's Britannia Hotel, defended the hotel's decision, saying a company's rates fluctuate according to demand, obviously.

Mr Davies said such a policy by hotels could have a serious effect on shops, restaurants, theatres and other amenities, as visitors would not stay in the cities as long.

## Professor aims to give cosmetic surgery a new complexion

GLENDA COOPER

In a world which has created a "new cosmetic underclass", plastic surgery should have the same moral value as treating heart disease, Britain's first professor of plastic surgery said yesterday.

Presenting the inaugural Medical Journalists' Association/Action Research Lecture, Professor Angus McGrouther said it was time to question labels such as "morally worthy" cosmetic surgery (for burn victims) and "morally unworthy" surgery (seen as pandering to people's vanity).

Two million people in Britain have some form of disfigure-

ment and research suggests that plastic surgery can dramatically improve the quality of their lives.

"I have seen three people in my clinic today who came in with stories of abuse from strangers for no reason other than they have a physical deformity," said Professor McGrouther. "It is a strange idea that we put values on treatment of different things. We see it as a good thing to treat cancer or accidents but we're not quite sure about disfigurement."

"We should be looking at whether we can help people with treatment rather than whether or not it is worthy. Someone with heart disease



It's all in the image: Professor Angus McGrouther, Helen of Troy and Michael Jackson



could have been a heavy smoker, but someone with a disfigurement has no control over that. We have got curious val-

ues. It's too simplistic to classify it as life-threatening or not." He said that he deplored the "supermodel culture of the

1990s" which was obsessed with idealised body images, causing those who could not measure up to lock themselves away. There

was nothing new about the power of body image, he added - after all, Helen of Troy had launched a thousand ships with her face - but that film, TV and advertising industries had given it a sharp new definition.

"It is society at large which needs treatment. We need to adjust our views about body image. Disfigurement is the last bastion of discrimination."

"We always used to have beautiful icons to look at but now there is encouragement to imitate those icons," he said.

"We're much less tolerant about the way people look. This is true of all walks of life. It's questionable as to whether Winston Churchill, or even

Harold Wilson, who was also on the round side, would have been electable today."

It was no surprise that the Princess of Wales had been treated more sympathetically than the buxom Duchess of York.

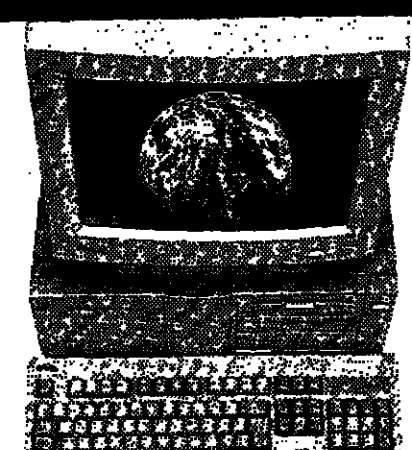
"Until her recent appearance on Panorama on BBC1, most of the public had little idea about the way Diana spoke or about her intellect. Until then we had only heard a few soundbites. We'd only had one criterion by which we could judge her directly: her body image."

Research in Oxford had shown that breast reduction surgery could have a dramatic

effect on the quality of life. Moving a tattoo from a woman's face could help him a job and support his wife family.

The professor went on to warn about the limits of surgery. Reports about Michael Jackson had created a misleading impression. Cosmetic surgery had helped to build up a white, half-black, half-half-adult, half-male, half-male image. "Most of the procedures he appears to have had a limited lifespan. For example, the nasal reconstruction he's had is notorious for requiring additional multiple grafts over the years - a chronic maintenance policy."


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## news

# Scott to deliver findings amid total secrecy

DONALD MACINTYRE  
and DAVID HELLIER

The potentially explosive arms to Iraq report of Sir Richard Scott will be given to the Government this week in conditions of unparalleled secrecy, after intense negotiations between Whitehall and the Scott inquiry team.

A strictly limited number of copies will be sent on a "need to know" basis only to some Cabinet ministers and a small group of senior officials charged with drawing up the Government's response – to be unveiled in a Commons statement on Thursday week by Ian Lang, the President of the Board of Trade. The Government has agreed to the stipulation that all advance copies – thought to be upwards of 20 – will not only be numbered, but also sent to named recipients and that none of them will be photocopied for wider distribution in Whitehall.

Meanwhile, the judge, speaking in an interview to be screened on Channel 4's *Dispatches* programme on Wednesday evening, the day the Government is due to receive a final draft, robustly defends the way he has conducted his in-

quiry, suggesting that "party political concerns" will influence reactions to it.

Sir Richard's remarks follow criticism from Government supporters such as Lord Howe and Sir Bernard Ingham, Baroness Thatcher's former press spokesman, and are sure to inflame the public row over the merit of the inquiry ahead of its publication next week.

He says: "It would be naive to believe that they [people's conclusions] will not be affected to some extent by party political concerns, particularly being so near an election. That's going to happen. It's rather a fact of life. In a way I regret it, but we live in the real world."

The judge adds: "Criticism in advance of reading the report has got to be worthless and I hope the public will realise that."

Later on he makes a reference to his foremost critics and without naming them says: "The people who have uttered these criticisms weren't on my Christmas card list anyway and they're not about to go on it."

Sir Richard's critics have argued that they do not believe his investigation should have been run on inquisitorial lines. Some of them have argued that in-

terviewees should have been given the option of taking legal representation with them to the oral hearings.

But Sir Richard says: "I'm not quite sure whether one could have had an inquiry if it wasn't inquisitorial... the important requirement is that the procedure is should be fair to all persons who are involved in the proceedings."

"If it had been necessary for there to be cross-examination conducted by lawyers on behalf of clients then that could have been provided for, but I simply don't agree that is an essential requirement in every case."

His report had taken more than three years to complete partly because he had to go a large number of witnesses to get evidence, both oral and written. He also went through a long process of giving witnesses provisional criticisms which they could respond to.

Sir Richard, who has been described by some Government supporters as something of a "maverick" and egotist, described himself during the interview as a "part of the establishment".

He said: "I think every judge is a member of the establish-



Axe to grind: Firemen demonstrating outside the Department of the Environment, London, yesterday

Photograph: Geraint Lewis

## Firefighters to be balloted over job cuts

BARRIE CLEMENT  
Labour Editor

Firefighters' leaders have authorised strike ballots in London, Essex, Surrey and Tyne and Wear, all of which are threatened with massive job cuts.

Senior officials at the Fire Brigades Union yesterday warned that if management proceeded with planned redundancies in the four areas,

their members would vote overwhelmingly to walk out.

The news emerged yesterday as strike leaders from Merseyside continued talks with officials at the conciliation service Acas. Firefighters in the Liverpool area have staged more than 30 stoppages since last August in protest at cutbacks.

Dave Higgs, a national official of the union, said London faced "devastating" cuts with a

£9m reduction in the budget, which senior fire officers argue would inevitably mean loss of life. In a paper sent to the Home Secretary, London's chief fire officer has warned that the capital faces the loss of 640 fire fighters, the closure of four fire stations and the removal of 22 appliances.

More than 100 firefighters from London protested about threatened job cuts and station

closures outside the Department of the Environment headquarters yesterday, handing in a 120,000 name petition. Another demonstration will be held on 22 February, when the London Fire and Civil Defence Authority meets to discuss its budget.

Colleagues yesterday paid a silent tribute to Fleur Lombard, 21, the first woman to die in Britain's fire service. Members

of her blue watch from the Speedwell fire station, Bristol, laid floral tributes on charred debris in the supermarket where she lost her life fighting a blaze and trying to see if the building was clear of customers.

The 12 men of the watch stood for a moment in silence bare-headed in the biting cold outside the main entrance of the Co-op store in Broad Street, Staple Hill.

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## Malaria drug users go to court over side effects

IAN MacKINNON

Lawyers acting for more than 100 people who have suffered severe side effects which they are convinced were caused by a leading antimalarial drug have applied for legal aid to sue the manufacturers.

Sufferers have complained that the mefloquine drug Lariam, prescribed by their GPs, caused symptoms so extreme that some have been unable to work for almost a year after they finished the course of tablets.

Little hard evidence exists to link the side effects to the drug, made by the Swiss pharmaceutical giant Hoffman-La Roche, but doctors say the anecdotal evidence is overwhelming and have called for a large-scale independent study.

The company recognises that Lariam, acknowledged as the strongest and most effective antimalarial drug, can cause severe side effects which can be fatal, but argue the risks are ex-

tremely low – as few as one in 10,000.

But growing numbers of Britons who have taken Lariam – used as some strains of malaria have become resistant to drugs such as chloroquine – have reported the symptoms first highlighted in the BBC *Watchdog* programme.

Dr Gordon Cook, at the Hospital for Tropical Diseases in London, has seen many patients who believe it has induced seizures, epileptic fits, manic depression and panic attacks.

"I am quite clear that these problems are common and of major significance," he said. "So much so that people are not taking the Lariam and leaving themselves open to... malaria."

One of those who claims to have suffered and become involved in the "legal class action" is Stuart Waddell, 33, from Coventry, who has not been able to work since last April.

He took Lariam before going on a business trip to

Malaysia and was affected even before he left home.

"I came over in this terrible, sweaty condition. My heart started racing and I felt nauseous... it took me 30 minutes to get a grip of myself," he said.

The symptoms continued when he returned home. "I went to work, but only stayed for three hours," said Mr Waddell, who has four children. "I was a totally different person. I used to be self-confident, easily able to deal with pressure situations. I told my wife I thought I was going mad."

Christiane Gaoziou, the solicitor acting for the complainants, said she was confident the group would be given legal aid.

However, a spokesman for the Department of Health said any risks from Lariam were still considered extremely low.

Hoffman-La Roche said it constantly reviewed Lariam's performance but had discovered no changes in the side effects it caused.

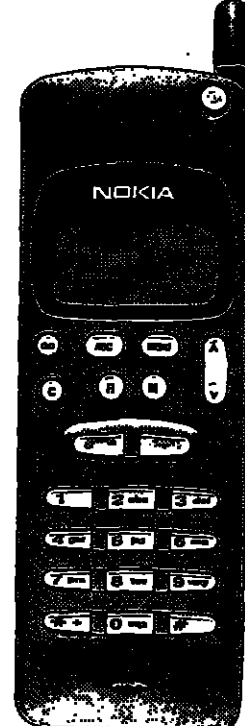
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هنا من الأصل

**Cervical cancer:** Hospital has 70,000 slides rechecked as doctors admit 700 patients may have been wrongly given all clear

## Women flood helpline after smear blunder

GLENDIA COOPER

Nearly 1,000 women telephoned an emergency helpline yesterday after senior hospital staff admitted that up to 700 women may have been wrongly told their cervical smear tests were negative.

Around 70,000 women, who were screened at Kent and Canterbury Hospital, will have their most recent tests rechecked after staff revealed they had discovered a mistake in the screening process during a routine audit last September.

All 70,000 hospital slides are being sent to screening centres at Manchester and Birmingham and it will be months before the rechecking results are known.

Kate Neales, a consultant gynaecologist, said: "What we did was look at a group of women who had a positive smear and we then went back and looked at their previous smear tests which had been reported as negative. When this retrospective check was undertaken it was possible to identify abnormal cells on some of those previous smear tests."

This meant that some women could have been identified earlier as having an abnormality. Samples of almost 11,000 smear tests were sent away to separate laboratories and of those 89 were found to be positive.

The smear test, in which cells from the cervix are analysed, does not detect cancer, but detects whether there are any potential problems which require further investigation. Early detection of precancerous cells leads to early treatment and survival rates of around 80 per cent.

Women aged 20 to 64 are invited to have a smear test at least once every five years. The Cervical Screening Programme, set up in 1988 and costing £100m a year, was the first of its kind in Europe and nationally eight out of 10 women now have regular smear tests.

Recent figures showed that the number of cervical cancer deaths is falling, from 1,485 in 1993 to 1,369 in 1994. The cancer screening programme estimates the death rate is falling by 7 per cent each year.

But there have been a number of incidents where results have been mistaken and last year 2,000 patients had their records recalled after it emerged that a radiotherapy machine at Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge, had been used on the wrong setting for 17 years.

Ann Farebrother, consultant in public health medicine for East Kent Health Authority which covers the Kent and Canterbury Hospital, said: "No screening programme is 100

per cent accurate. The success rate of picking up abnormal smears is between 85 to 95 per cent."

Edward Pearson, chief executive of the hospital trust, who described the mix-up as a "high profile and emotional issue", said he did not know how much the re-testing was likely to cost. He said that all the women concerned would be written to over the next two weeks informing them of the review.

Women in the Canterbury and Thanet area who had smear tests between 1990 and 1995 can ring the helpline on 01227 766016.



Under the microscope: The cytology unit at Kent and Canterbury Hospital where there has been an error in smear tests. Photograph: Edward Webb

## Scottish Office to 'give away' crofts to tenants

JOHN ARLIDGE

The Government is to "give away" Scottish crofts. Michael Forsyth, the Secretary of State for Scotland, yesterday unveiled plans to hand over 100,000 hectares of government-owned crofting land to local people.

The move is part of Mr Forsyth's effort to use "administrative devolution" - transferring powers from the Scottish Office to local communities - to combat Labour's plans for legislative devolution north of the border. Locals will take over the first government-owned croft later this year.

Addressing the Commons Grand Committee of Scottish MPs in the Highland capital of Inverness yesterday, Mr Forsyth said that when he took office last July he was astonished to find he was Scotland's largest crofting landlord. The Scottish Office took over 14 million acres of land, including 95 crofting estates, at the end of the First World War to provide work for returning soldiers.

"I found I had over 100,000 hectares of land and 1,400 croft holdings," he said. He then announced plans to hand over the land to crofters to improve its management and productivity.

Local people could run the crofts "better than a government department which, with the best will in the world, cannot be as sensitive to a community's needs and priorities as those who actually live there". Quoting the unofficial Scottish national anthem, *Flower of Scotland*, Mr Forsyth said the initiative would enable crofters to secure their "wee bit hill and glen".

Ministers were so committed to the project that some estates could be handed over free. "We have a duty to the taxpayer but it may be that in some cases viability will be best secured by giving away some crofts," he said.

In recent years Scotland's 10,000 crofters have begun to take control of their smallholdings, angered by private landowners' reluctance to invest in "marginal" plots. Crofters in Sutherland, Skye and Knoydart have led moves towards community buyouts. Yesterday the Crofters' Commission welcomed Mr Forsyth's announcement as "the opening chapter in a new era for crofting which offers remote rural communities radically new opportunities for security and sustainability which could help arrest the long, slow decline of fortunes in the Highlands and Islands".

### DAILY POEM

#### A Small Town in the Sudan

By Ian Pople

There is an autumn in the heat.  
Yesterday she cut his hair in the garden,  
and the hair and small leaves spiralled  
over the sand. In the sunset a dog  
moves from heat to heat among the refuse  
on a corrugated roof as she comes  
from the shower wrapped in a towel  
and shaking her thin wet hair.

Tonight slender girls will pass their house.  
Round their heads the gaudy scarves  
of black and gold, of orange and brown,  
and on their heads the wicker trays.  
One of them will stop outside the house  
and sit beside a hurricane lamp  
to winnow peanuts. He thinks that she  
will do this for forty years, and that  
already she will have some particular way  
of twisting paper funnels, of flicking  
peanuts so the least amount is lost.  
His wife will dry her hair and go out  
past card players under the tree -  
they look up and straighten their white emmas,  
their white jellabias - and she will give  
the smiling girl crumpled money.

Ian Pople was born in Ipswich and educated at the British Council, Athens, and Aston and Manchester universities. He is a teacher by profession and has taught English in secondary schools and universities in Sudan, Greece, Saudi Arabia and Britain, while contributing poetry frequently to the *Times Literary Supplement*, *London Review of Books* and *Poetry Review*. This poem, the first of four parts of "A Small Town in the Sudan", is taken from *The Glass Encounter* (Arc, £5.95), a Poetry Book Society Recommendation, which has been praised by John Fuller for its ability to "accumulate telling details like the montage of documentary film".



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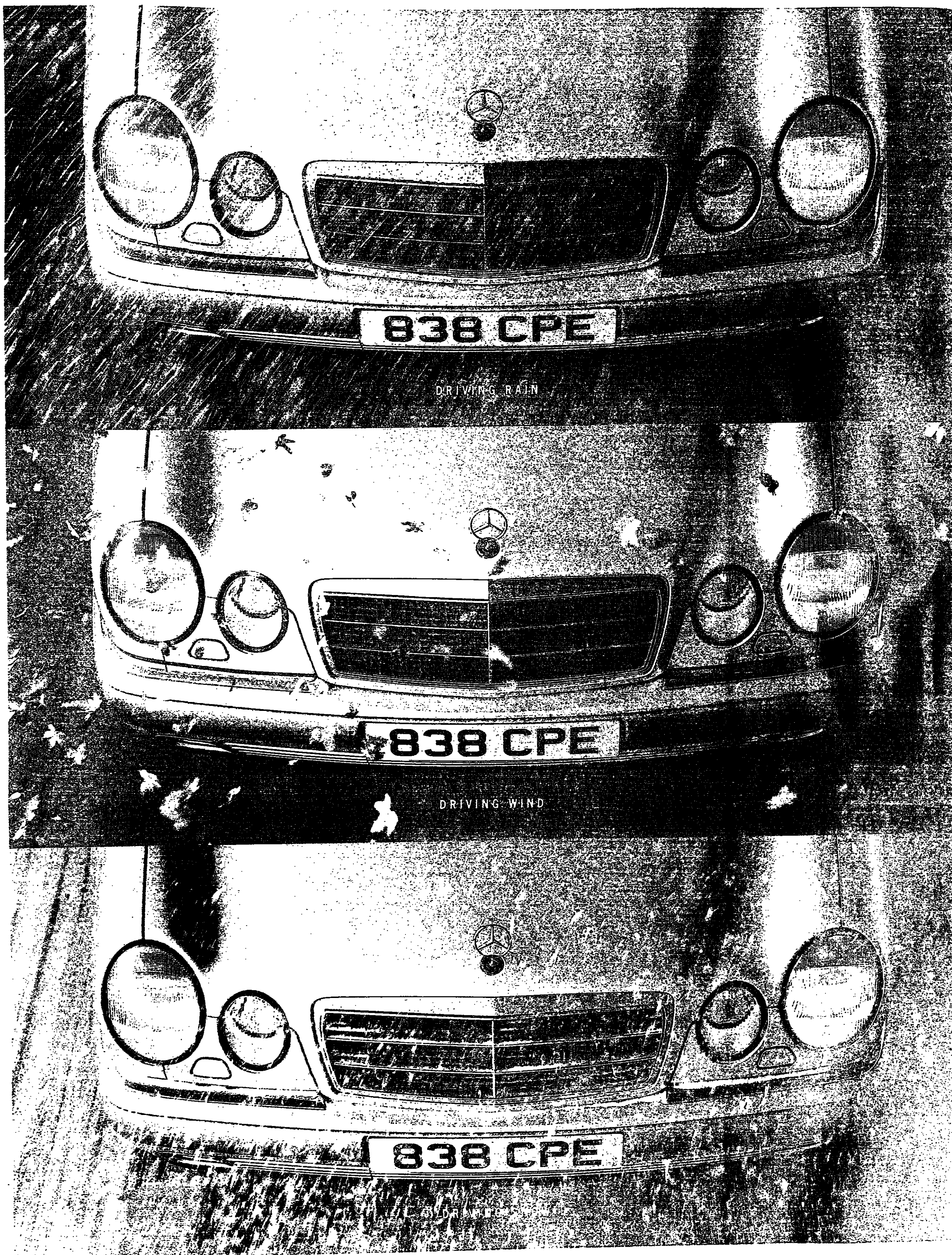
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## News

## Backbencher's Bill targets sexually explicit girls' magazines

RIANNE MACDONALD  
via Correspondent

ually explicit teenage magazines will be obliged to print intended age range of their readership if a Bill introduced by the House of Commons is successful.

he Bill, sponsored by Peter

Luff, the Tory MP for Worcester, is the result of a decision to back through the magazine he bought for his 10-year-old daughter Rosie on holiday. Mr Luff, 40, was horrified to find that the problem pages of the pre-teen magazine *Show* featured advice to a girl who had found pornographic pictures

and letters from a man who wanted to "do it" with her mother under her parents' bed. "I didn't want my 10-year-old daughter to be worried about marital infidelity," he said. "Putting the idea into their heads that even happily married couples might be sleeping around was, I thought, unhelpful."

The magazines Mr Luff is particularly targeting are *Sugar*, *It's Bliss*, *Mizz*, *19*, and *More*. "I have learnt things from these magazines which even I did not know at my advanced age," the MP said yesterday. Some - which were read by girls as young as nine - described oral sex in detail, using

language no newspaper would print, he added. After studying them, he now believes *Show* is relatively innocent. Mr Luff is bringing his Private Member's Bill into the House under the 10-minute rule, which is more normally used as a platform for debate. It has two clauses. The first would oblige

publishers of teenagers' magazines to print the lowest recommended reader age on the cover. The second would allow a body such as trading standards departments to fine those who did not. The Periodical (Protection of Children) Bill is being supported by five Tory backbenchers, three Labour

MPs, and a Liberal Democrat. Last week the monthly magazine *Sugar*, which launched 15 months ago to a readership ranging from 13 to 19, announced a 21 per cent increase in circulation since July. It now sells more than 318,000 copies. The March issue includes a reader survey on sex and con-

traception which reveals that 42 per cent of its readers have lost their virginity. Of those, 74 per cent were under 16 at the time, while more than one-fifth were 13 or younger. Only 26 per cent of those questioned were confident about refusing sex if they did not want to have it.

## Straw says courts are too soft

ROIA WYNN DAVIES  
STEPHEN GOODWIN

criminal justice system is soft on criminal defence, Jack Straw, the shadow Home Secretary, said yesterday. Labour's latest attack on conservatives' law and order policies, following an analysis of conviction rates in England and Wales as a proportion of recorded instances of six of the most serious crimes, Mr Straw said: "I think there is no doubt that the balance has swung too far in favour of the defence."

ed woundings or other acts of endangering life have fallen from 29 per cent in 1980 to 17 per cent in 1994. For rape there was a fall from 37 per cent, or one in three, to 9 per cent, or one in 11. For aggravated burglary there was a fall from 36 per cent to 10 per cent, 24 to 9 per cent for robbery and 23 to 9 per cent for arson.

The percentage of convictions or cautions for recorded burglaries has dropped from 9 per cent, or 1 in 11, to 3 per cent, or 1 in every 33.

Mr Straw confirmed Labour's backing for the current parliamentary Bill providing for advance disclosure of defence evidence.

Later, in a Government debate on policing in London, Mr Straw told the Commons that the existing criminal justice system did not deal with the disorder and apparently petty crime which was the cause of so much of the public's fear of crime. "As loutish behaviour and disorder on the streets has increased so too, rationally, has people's fear of crime."

He called for clearer laws on when young criminals could be brought before the courts, and added: "Despite the reduction in the number of cases coming before youth justice courts, the delays are getting worse." There were "ludicrously complicated" rules on secure accommodation for young offenders.

There were lessons to be learned from the New York police's handling of street crime and disorder, where people had a "palpable sense that the streets were safer", he said.



Crimewatch: Jack Straw gives his conviction rate figures. Photograph: Peter Macdonald

- Opposition attacks Heseltine over late payment of debts
- Bottomley says Lottery has created 150 millionaires

## Hypocrisy jibe paid back with interest

The Tories' favourite Commons jibe of last week - "Saying one thing and doing another" - turned into a boomerang yesterday as Labour MPs made hay with Michael Heseltine's relaxed attitude to paying business bills.

Virginia Bottomley, Secretary of State for National Heritage, found herself manoeuvred into defending the Deputy Prime Minister during Question Time exchanges on the tourist industry.

Spotting the chance to make trouble, Dennis Skinner said one of the biggest threats to small businesses involved in tourism was late payment. "It's even worse when Mr Heseltine makes a statement that brags about not paying his debts, and managing to put other businesses into bankruptcy."

Mr Heseltine told a private dinner last week that late payment was part of the culture of British business, that as a small businessman himself he had been "quite skilful at stringing along the creditors".

A former partner, Ian Josephs, was quoted in the *Daily Telegraph* yesterday saying that they kept creditors waiting by sending cheques with only one signature when two were needed, or ensuring the words and figures did not match.

Last Friday, the Government published legislation to encourage prompt payment in the building industry. Ministers were also understood to be sympathetic to a Private Member's Bill sponsored by Jon Owen Jones, Labour MP for Cardiff Central, to give a legal right to interest on commercial debt.

But Mrs Bottomley appeared unaware of these moves, or the exhortation on Whitehall departments to improve their poor record on payments, as she rejected the Bofover MP's demand that she admonish Mr Heseltine "for this Gerald Ratner-type bombshell".

Dismissing Mr Skinner's "windy rhetoric" she said employment in the tourist industry had increased by one-fifth in the last 10 years. "And in the last

Neath, wondered if Mr Heseltine was advocating that the Government "start fiddling their bill-paying", then Mr Skinner returned to the fray, asking Miss Boothroy if the Deputy Prime Minister had ever tried to borrow money from her. If he did, "tell him you're tough on debt and tough on the causes of debt".

Outside the House, Barbara Roche, Labour's spokesperson on small business, called on Mr Heseltine to apologise for his "appalling personal and political behaviour".

Heritage Question Time has become so dominated by the National Lottery that no harm would be done to the serious content of the exchanges, if Mrs Bottomley was substituted by Anthea Turner, who hosts the weekly draw.

Mrs Bottomley yesterday capped her litany of statistics, including more than 150 millionaires so far and £1.5bn for good causes, with the depressing assertion that the lottery has become the nation's favourite topic of conversation. She was replying to Peter Brooke, a former heritage secretary, who asked if she felt pleasure or concern at the fact that more than half of the questions put down for the 15-minute session were about the lottery.

Unalloyed pleasure seemed to be the answer. Mrs Bottomley, member of a family syndicate, assured MPs the lottery was a resounding success. "The lottery has taken over as the great conversation piece, not only in this House, but throughout our newspapers. It is our favourite topic of conversation."

**Inside Parliament**  
**Stephen Goodwin**

10 years Mr Heseltine has played a crucial role in making our country more competitive and fighting the corner of industry.

Later, on a point of order, George Foulkes, Labour MP for Carrick, Cumnock and Doon, noted the Government's support for the commercial debt Bill. "If we have now got this admission for the Deputy Prime Minister that he held off paying his creditors as long as possible, is this not an example of hypocrisy - of saying one thing and doing another?"

Speaker Betty Boothroyd rebuked Mr Foulkes for abusing the time of the House, but his colleagues cheered his twisting of the soundbite used by the Tories against Labour in the Harriet Harman schools row. Peter Hain, Labour MP for

## The business

ones: Defence questions; Minister's Questions; Defence of GP fundholding; Redundancies; Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations; non debate on proposed of Frances Withers Sutton Colfield, London; asking Bill, Committee; on farms health and

## MoD to sell off mansion that cost RAF chief his career

COLIN BROWN  
Chief Political Correspondent

A "des res" recently refurbished at a cost of £380,000 is to be put on the open market by the Ministry of Defence, Michael Portillo, the Secretary of State for Defence, told MPs yesterday.

Haynes Garth in Chel-

tenham, Gloucestershire, is expected to raise £500,000 for the taxpayer when it is put on the market at the end of the year. For potential buyers, the house could be a bargain. It has 12 rooms with 20 large windows, all which have been fitted with new curtains at a cost of £35,000.

A princely £30,000 was spent on carpets. No expense was

spared in fitting out the house for entertaining by its former occupants, Air Chief Marshal Sir Sandy Wilson, 54, and his wife. But potential purchasers may be put off by the thought that the house cost Sir Sandy his career and could lead to dozens of other senior officers' residences being put on the market. Sir Sandy was forced to resign

from the RAF last year, with a £50,000 a year pension and £150,000 lump sum, by Malcolm Rifkind, the former Secretary of State, after the lavish extent of the refurbishment caused a political storm.

It is currently occupied by Air Marshal David Cousins, the Air Officer Commander in Chief, Personnel and Training

Command. Mr Portillo announced it would be sold when he moves into another residence adjacent to his headquarters, occupied by Air Vice Marshal John May, the Air Officer Training. That will not be until Air Vice Marshal May completes his tour of duty. The MoD said last night it would be "towards the end of the year".

The housing market may have picked up by then, but the taxpayer cannot expect to make a killing. In addition to the cost of refurbishments, the row led to a £100,000 auditor's report into the disposal of MoD property. David Clark, Labour's Defence spokesman, said: "It is another example of a gross waste of taxpayer's money. It

will mean the taxpayer will lose a lot of money on it."

■ Sir John Bourn, the Auditor General, today reports that overpayments of £19.8m in taxpayers' money have been paid by the Department of Education and Employment to Training and Enterprise Councils, including £7.9m for training weeks which were ineligible.

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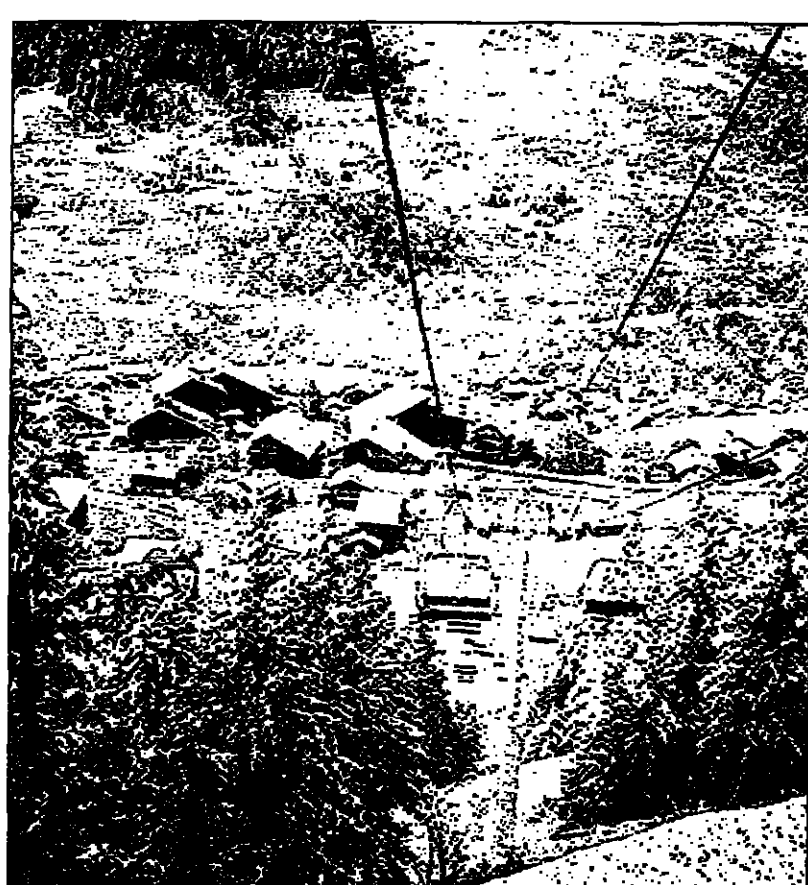
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- Your holiday availability will then be checked and the booking price confirmed.
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هنا من الأصل



# Bosnia team on trail of 'worst massacre so far'

EMMA DALY  
Tuzla

The search for thousands of people missing and presumed dead in Bosnia is gathering pace with new investigations into allegations of mass murder and mass graves being planned by senior Western officials.

The latest to visit Srebrenica, site of what is feared to have been the greatest massacre in Europe since the Second World War, was Elizabeth Rehn, the UN's Special Rapporteur on Human Rights, who won a promise from the Bosnian Serbs that women refugees would be allowed to visit Srebrenica to search for their men.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has more than 12,000 reports from families of people who disappeared. Three-quarters involve people missing from Srebrenica, which fell to Serb forces in July. The women cling to the hope of secret Serb prison camps; most fear their men are dead.

Serb officials in Srebrenica told Ms Rehn they held no prisoners. "I said that it's obvious now that there are quite a lot of mass graves, that a lot of people have been killed, and now it's in the interests of all of us

to know exactly what happened," said Ms Rehn, the former Finnish defence minister. "We must have a readiness very soon to open them, because there is no time to be lost."

Ms Rehn, who cited a figure of 3,000 to 5,000 people missing from the enclave, said she could not prove that mass killings took place, but added that "the evidence for massacres is very strong".

The women of Srebrenica have waited for more than six months for news of their relatives, and their anguish has turned to anger, with several noisy demonstrations against the Red Cross and local government offices in Tuzla.

The protests have paused as the women put their faith in Ms Rehn, who persuaded the Serbs to grant one of their demands: permission for a bus trip to Srebrenica and its environs. They are convinced that some of their men are still alive, held in slave labour camps in the area: Ms Rehn visited two of the 10 sites the women named, but found nothing.

Mina Mujic, described by a colleague as one of "the brave", plans to be on the bus. "I want to see the place where I spent my life and I want to find 35 relatives who are missing," she said

firmly. Ms Mujic, whose husband walked to safety in Tuzla one month after Srebrenica fell, believes her brother Nazif is imprisoned in a factory; the information came from his former boss, a Serb.

The news that the Serbs denied holding prisoners - mis-reported as "Rehn says all the missing are dead" - caused much grief.

"How can I have hope when they said last night on the television there was a mass grave with 3,000 bodies?" asked Sadea Dizdarevic, a weaver. "I lost my husband in 1993 and I don't know anything about my son." Ms Dizdarevic and her two daughters were evacuated when Srebrenica fell - but 17-year-old Selvedin tried to escape.

Ms Rehn believes that eventually such information will emerge, and is hopeful that she will gain access to the graves, following a reversal of the four-year Serb policy of sealing such places to outsiders.

The change will be tested again today, when John Shattuck, US Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights, is due to visit an open-cast mine in northern Bosnia alleged to hold the remains of several thousand Muslims massacred by Serbs in 1992.



Washing in public: A family in Srebrenica do their everyday chores amid the debris of the enclave Photograph: AP

## Clinton mourns first US death

AGENCIES

President Bill Clinton has expressed condolences to the widow of the first US soldier killed while on duty in Bosnia. The president spoke to Miriam Dugan, wife of Sergeant 1st Class Donald Dugan, by telephone on Sunday morning, said a White House spokesman, David Johnson.

Sgt Dugan, 38, of Belle Center, Ohio, was killed on Saturday in northern Bosnia. He was the ninth alliance soldier to die since Nato troops took over from the United Nations in the Balkans in December.

In Sarajevo, a spokesman for the Nato peace force corrected a previous official statement to make it clear that Dugan's death was not caused by a land mine. The spokesman said that Dugan apparently picked up a piece of unexploded ammunition from the side of the road and it exploded in his hands.

Stars and Stripes, the US military newspaper, said that Bidingen, the military community in Germany where Sgt Dugan lived before deployment to Bosnia, has guards posted to check entering cars. Some residents said they did not want to talk to reporters, while others said the military asked them not to speak to the press.

"The base - which stands almost a ghost town with its soldiers deployed - had been accessible earlier this week, but on Sunday guards stopped every car that entered," the newspaper said.



Dugan: Died when he picked up ammunition

## British 'flying chefs' set to cook up a storm for hungry GIs

CHRISTOPHER BELLAMY  
Tuzla

They are the flying chefs. They all have a British military background, mostly from the Army Catering Corps, and some from the Navy or RAF, and many have worked in five-star hotel restaurants. They boldly go where no other chef will go - into Kuwait and Saudi Arabia in 1991, Somalia, and now to the US sector in Bosnia.

The US army has arrived here with a panoply of military hardware. Its equipment and demeanour are impressive, and

the locals respect both its power and the soldiers' politeness. But back at base, US logistics are a shambles. More than a month after they set foot in Bosnia, the yanks are still eating Meals Ready to Eat, which require no cooking. These combat rations will keep troops going in battle but are not particularly nutritious over a long period and certainly do nothing for morale.

So the US army has contracted with the firm Brown and Root to sort out the army's supply problems, and that company in turn has sub-contracted the catering work to three firms which employ the flying chefs.

In all, around 60 British staff have been flown in to Bosnia. As the British army knows so well, on a tour of several months - or in the Americans' case, a year - with long periods of boredom punctuated by brief periods of terror, top-class food is central to maintaining morale and efficiency. A US officer attached to the British base, five hours' drive away, at Gorzji Vakuf, could not contain his first impression of the Brits. "The food's so good," he said, tucking into a second designer pud-

ding which would not have shamed the Rous brothers.

The kitchens at the base of Task Force Eagle at Tuzla air base, on the other hand, had been overrun by rats. Cats - the natural solution - are not in evidence: indeed, after the near-siege of Tuzla in 1993-94, very few cats and dogs are to be seen here. On the British base at Gorzji, however, a perceptive advance party of feral cats are re-establishing a presence.

The flying chefs will get the kitchens at Tuzla and the other kitchens in the area organised, hygienic, and producing

hot, fresh food for 20,000 troops three times a day - a formidable task.

The sub-contractors are also taking care of the American laundry. Last week 140 washing machines had been installed at one base, and the contractors reckoned they could do 18 loads a day. That, too, will help keep the US-led Multinational Division (North) happy.

Last week the flying chefs were raring to go, but there were delays - as there are in every military operation - and, in the meantime, they were billeted at the biggest hotel in

Tuzla. "We've recruited the [local] staff. We've got them medicalled - everything. They want to work because they haven't worked for so long. They want to learn," said one chef, a former sergeant major. "Meanwhile, we just wait for the go."

The flying chefs' expertise extends beyond cooking: they can also undertake security work as they are all trained soldiers. As part of the US operation, the flying chefs were also subject to US Field Order Number One, forbidding consumption of alcohol or gambling anywhere "in theatre". As many chefs had

worked in the Gulf during the war there, this was not a problem. But it seemed unjust, as the Americans had not yet given them the green light.

In the hotel, we had all taken to bringing our own builders' tea bags down to breakfast, as the tea provided was a perfumed herbal concoction with half the sugar production of the Caribbean already dissolved in it. We asked for some milk. Eventually, they brought it. Hot, reconstituted powdered milk. "And they don't even know how to do that properly," said the ex-sergeant major.

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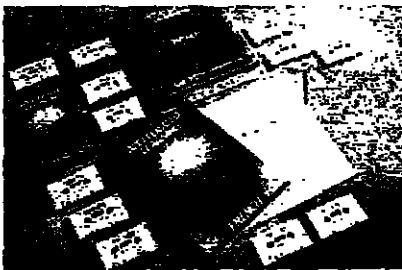
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# international

Diplomacy: War games threaten Taiwan again

## US calms China but talks tough

RUPERT CORNWELL  
Washington  
TERESA POOLE  
Peking

In a delicate diplomatic balancing act, the US is trying to ease tensions between China and Taiwan, while stepping up its pressure on Peking to improve its human rights record and cease its violations of international trade and weapons non-proliferation treaties.

Senior Clinton Administration officials will be making these concerns plain to the deputy Chinese foreign minister, Li Zhaoxing, who is visiting Washington this week. Mr Li's trip comes amid reports of planned large-scale naval manoeuvres by the Chinese military in the straits separating the mainland from Taiwan, and carefully leaked warnings by Peking that it has readied plans to crush Mr Lee's regime by military means if necessary — both clearly designed to intimidate Taiwan's assertive President Lee Teng-hui.

According to the *Washington Post* yesterday, the Administration's priority is to "calm down" the frictions over Taiwan, which have caused near panic in some Asian financial markets, by persuading the Chinese that everyone — including Peking —

would suffer from any destabilisation of the region.

But this will not be easy, given the list of grievances with which Mr Li will be presented. They range from accusations that China is ignoring its 1995 undertaking to halt pirating of US-registered video, CD and other electronic goods to new evidence that China is flouting arms proliferation controls.

Although the White House is reported to have dropped plans to impose a deadline, Mr Li will be told his country faces severe economic sanctions if it fails to halt the illegal production.

Simultaneously, fresh trouble is brewing over Chinese weapons exports to Iran and Pakistan. Last week, the commander of US forces in the Persian Gulf claimed Peking had sold advanced cruise missiles to the Iranians, while the CIA is complaining about alleged Chinese sales to Pakistan of uranium enrichment equipment.

China's land, sea and air exercises are being timed to have the maximum impact on Taiwan's first democratic presidential elections, scheduled for 23 March.

Taiwan's defence ministry yesterday said mainland troops in the coastal province of Fujian, opposite Taiwan, had not shown any irregular movements. But

the island's stock market fell sharply after a report in the *Hong Kong Sing Tao* newspaper that 400,000 Chinese troops were massing.

China conducted two series of war-games last year, after President Lee's visit to the US in June enraged Peking's leaders. In the summer the army test-fired missiles into the sea around Taiwan. Then in September land and sea exercises left the Taiwanese in no doubt of China's intentions should the island state declare independence.

President Lee, the expected winner of the March polls, yesterday dismissed the upcoming drills. "They are scared to death of our historic presidential election," he said.

All parties are trying to calm the situation. President Lee has recently let the Clinton Administration know that he does not plan a visit to the US after the election, thereby defusing the most likely trigger for a dangerous escalation in the cross-straits friction.

Similarly, Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives and leader of the militant Republican friends of Taiwan, last week indicated that Congress would not issue its own invitation to a re-elected President Lee.



Head of steam: Dawn in Butte, Montana, an old mining town in the grip of winter. Overnight temperatures at the weekend dipped to -33C. Photograph: AP

## Saddam told to 'swallow pride' on oil

SAFA HAERI  
Paris  
DAVID USBORNE  
New York

President Saddam Hussein agreed to open new talks with the UN on limited oil sales only after he had been convinced that there was no possibility of change in the US insistence on sanctions, according to Middle East sources.

President Saddam was told bluntly by a team of ministers led by the veteran Tariq Aziz, the influential Deputy Prime Minister, that Iraq had a choice: either to "swallow its pride and accept the UN offer or to face a nationwide uprising," the source said, as the country is desperate for money.

This suggests that negotiations which open in New York today may finally result in agreement between the United Nations and Iraq on oil sales. At stake is Resolution 986 of the UN Security Council, which would permit Iraq to export up to \$1bn (£660m) of oil every 90 days for a 180-day period on condition that the proceeds are used to pay for the country's humanitarian needs.

Until now President Saddam has systematically ruled out any such conditional negotiations, pointing out that they violated Iraqi sovereignty, and pressed for a relaxation of sanctions. But "he was told by [Iraqi] Aziz that he should not count on any change in Clinton's position concerning Iraq during an election year, no matter what pressure France, Russia and China might exercise in the Security Council", the source added.

Diplomats at the United Nations were cautioning yesterday that they did not expect talks with Iraq on allowing it to export limited quantities of oil for humanitarian reasons to be either easy or quick. "There is no sense of optimism," remarked one European

diplomat who will be monitoring the negotiations. "We are in a wait-and-see mode, because I don't think any of us yet know whether Iraq is really serious about this. The only person who does know is probably Saddam Hussein himself."

The United States reiterated at the UN yesterday that the provisions in the resolution itself were not open for renegotiation. The resolution includes conditions that a majority of the oil be exported via a pipeline through Turkey to the Mediterranean; that 30 per cent of what Baghdad earns be set aside to pay claims against Iraq arising from the Gulf war; and that at least \$130m of the revenues in each 90-day period be assigned to Iraqi Kurds. The whole operation, meanwhile, would be overseen by the United Nations.

The negotiations will begin this morning behind closed doors at the UN headquarters and are expected to take days and possibly weeks. "We expect them [the Iraqis] to drag this out with all kinds of objections on technical and sovereignty questions," one official said.

The Iraqi team will be led by Abdul Amir al-Anbari, the present Iraqi envoy to UNesco in Paris. One of Iraq's most able and senior diplomats, Mr Anbari performed well at the UN during the difficult days of the Gulf war.

Foreign diplomats based in Baghdad said yesterday that they saw signs Iraq was preparing to soften its position.

Official media in Baghdad mentioned Resolution 986 without criticism for the first time yesterday. Iraqi authorities have also been stressing the preparations they have made to load tankers at terminals in the northern Gulf. Iraq said on Sunday that two of its tankers were ready to supply fuel to ships calling at Iraqi ports, the official Iraqi News Agency reported.

## UN ready to lay off staff in cash crisis

New York — For the first time in its history, the United Nations is planning to lay off staff members in New York and at other UN missions around the world in a last-resort effort to save money and stave off impending insolvency, writes David Usborne.

The move, which is likely to be welcomed by the UN's critics, may be announced as early as this morning by the Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in testimony to a committee on financial reform.

Officials denied reports yesterday that as many as 1,500 UN jobs were to be eliminated. Sources close to the Secretary-General confirmed, however, that a staff reduction plan would include "a limited number of lay-offs".

A report in yesterday's *Washington Post* said that "a massacre" was possible among the organisation's 14,000 professional and clerical workers.

Mr Boutros-Ghali has been urged to take drastic action by the Under-Secretary-General charged with overseeing UN finances, Joseph Connor, an American. Mr Connor, who came to the UN from the accounting firm Price Waterhouse, has warned that a current budget deficit of \$2.1bn (£1.3bn) means the organisation will run out of funds entirely by the end of April unless action is taken.

A memorandum to the Secretary-General from the UN's finance committee concluded that the cash crisis was a "politically inspired financial collapse". Half of the money the UN is missing is owed to it by the United States.

## Homeless quake victims freeze

TERESA POOLE  
Peking

Sub-zero temperatures and seismic aftershocks were hindering rescue efforts in Lijiang yesterday as the death toll from Saturday night's earthquake reached about 250. Doctors working in tents and outdoors battled to treat about 3,700 severely injured people, while hundreds of thousands of the homeless prepared to spend their third night outdoors.

Yunnan provincial officials said that rescue teams had evacuated 22 foreign tourists stranded at Tiger Leaping Gorge, a popular day trip about 60 miles from Lijiang. One American man was seriously injured, and another four tourists were slightly hurt. The Lijiang valley, in south-west China, is dominated by Jade Dragon Snow mountain, a popular tourist destination. However, there have been no reports of foreigners killed in the quake, which registered 7 on the Richter scale.

Television pictures last night showed dazed villagers picking through the rubble of their homes. Provincial officials said 180,000 buildings had been destroyed. The Chinese Red Cross

Society has appealed for international aid: food, warm clothing, tents and quilts are desperately needed for the impoverished area. Temperatures have plunged much lower than normal for this time of year, dropping to -10C at night. Sixteen of the county's 24 towns were heavily damaged, and power and water supplies have been disrupted in many areas.

In some parts of the old town of Lijiang about 10 per cent of the homes were destroyed. The town is the centre for the Naxi minority nationality, and with its cobbled streets and distinctive architecture, was one of the most picturesque places in China.

Buildings were further weakened as aftershocks continued. The largest tremor, in the early morning, reached 6 on the Richter scale. New casualties seemed to have been avoided as terrified residents had already left their homes. "It doesn't matter whether people still have homes or they don't. Everyone is too scared to go inside," said one official.

Outside the towns, north-west Yunnan province is one of the poorest regions of China, and medical facilities are extremely limited.

## Guatemala assassination scare clouds Pope's arrival

PHIL DAVISON  
Latin America Correspondent

The Pope was due in Guatemala City at the start of a Central American tour last night amid heightened security after what was billed as an assassination attempt against his host, President Alvaro Arzu.

The incident raised fears that someone — most fingers pointed to disgruntled Guatemalan military officers — wanted to disrupt the Pope's visit and might try again during his four nights in the Guatemalan capital, day trips to Nicaragua and El Salvador or a weekend stopover in Venezuela.

In a bizarre incident 24 hours before the Pope flew in, a milkman drove his pick-up truck into a group of horseback riders including the newly-elected President, his wife and security men outside the tourist town of Antigua, 30 miles west of the capital.

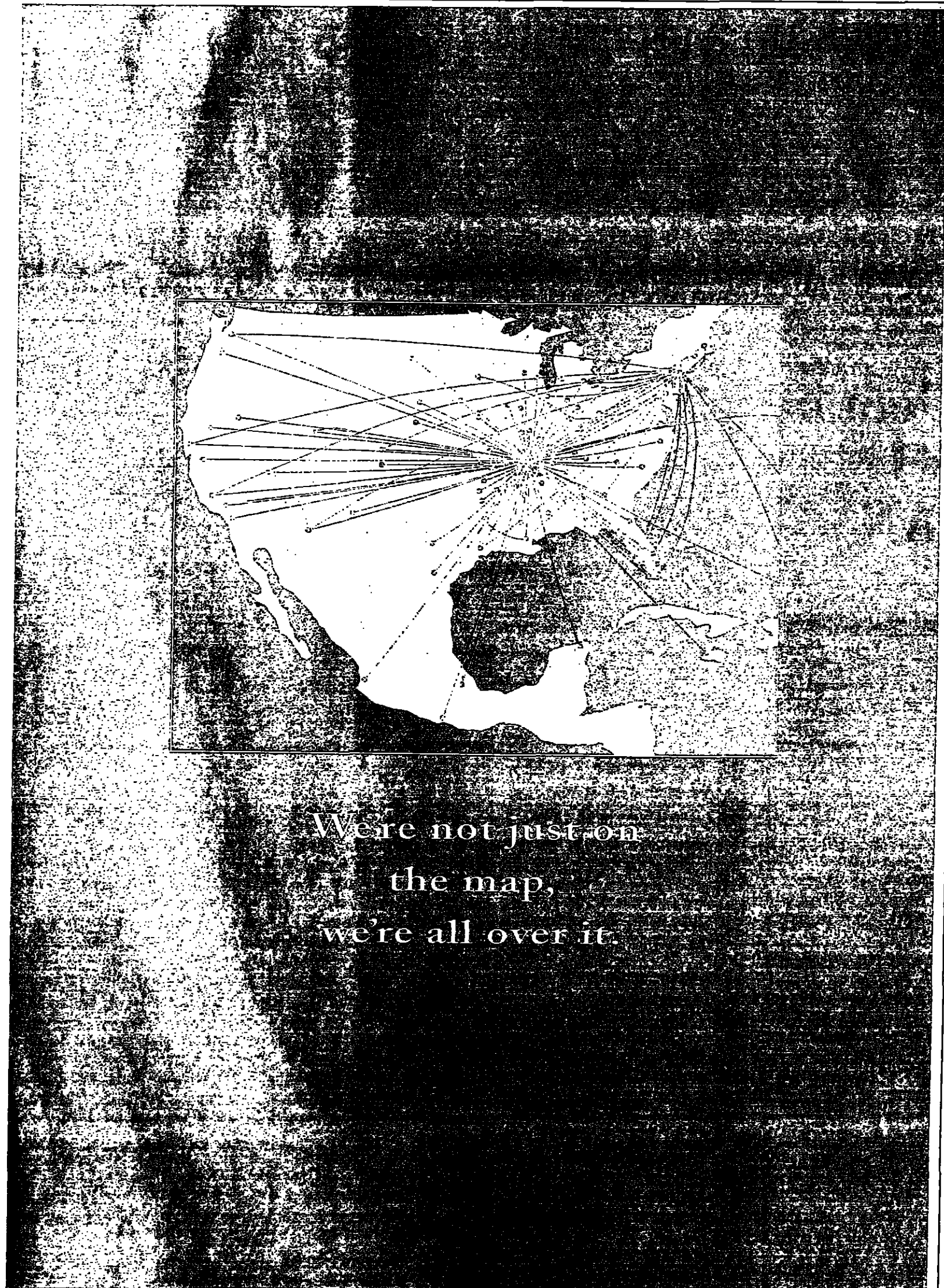
The milkman, named as 24-year-old Pedro Haroldo Sas or Zas, was shot dead by bodyguards after repeatedly trying to drive into Mr Arzu and his horse, injuring one mounted bodyguard and ramming accompanying presidential vehicles, according to the official version. The President was unharmed.

The dead man's father insisted it had been nothing more than a traffic accident. "He was working, delivering milk. He had no weapon," he said.

The Interior Minister, Rodolfo Mendoza, said: "This could have been a crazy man but we are not ruling out anything." He added that extra security measures were being put in force to protect the Pope. An autopsy was being carried out to see whether the milkman had been drinking or on drugs. The government spokesman, Ricardo de la Torre, was emphatic. "Today, there was an attempt to assassinate President Alvaro Arzu and the first lady of the nation, Patricia Escobar de Arzu," he told a news conference.

Foreign diplomats and local priests speculated that military officers, angered by Mr Arzu's dismissal of several hard-line officers since he took office last month, may have hired the milkman as a hitman. In the presidential election run-off Mr Arzu, a 49-year-old businessman, defeated a candidate widely seen as a front for the former military dictator General Efraim Rios Montt, who was barred from running because of his past.

The general, who is also Protestant evangelical dedicated to converting Catholics, was in power during the Pope's last visit to Guatemala in 1983. He "welcomed" the Pontiff at that time by executing six left-wing suspects for whom the Pope had called for clemency.



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# Golan settlers fear withdrawal looms

PATRICK COCKBURN  
Qazrin, Golan Heights

Israel: As Warren Christopher meets Shimon Peres, a deal with Syria hangs in the balance

Israeli settlers in Qazrin, the largest town in the Golan Heights, watched anxiously yesterday as thousands of demonstrators gathered to show their opposition to withdrawal.

"The spirit of the people has declined since the assassination of Rabin," says Marla Van Meir, spokesperson for the Golan residents. "Before that people opposed the government, but now the tendency is to rally around it."

The Golan settlers were hoping to revive the spirit of opposition among the 50,000 demonstrators, each of whom

was to plant a symbolic tree, expressing Israel's determination not to give the Heights, captured in 1967, back to Syria. All were to receive certificates saying they had planted a tree "to honour the homeland in the basalt land of the Golan."

It is a critical moment for the 15,000 settlers. As their supporters were gathering, Warren Christopher, the US Secretary of State, was meeting Shimon Peres, the Prime Minister, in Jerusalem on his 10th visit to the Middle East in three years to try to broker a deal between Israel and Syria. Mr Peres has already

said peace means Israel returning the Golan.

Nobody expects any breakthrough before the Israeli elections, now expected to be brought forward from October to May, but if Mr Peres and the Labour government win, then a peace agreement is possible before the end of the year.

The future of the Golan will therefore depend on the election in which the Right will try to make withdrawal from the Golan and peace with Syria the central issue. It can do little else because in the wake of Rabin's assassination, peace with the

Palestinians and the Oslo accords are favoured by 59 per cent of Israeli voters.

The Golan settlers and their friends like to emphasise how different they are from Israeli settlers on the West Bank and in Gaza, with their reputation for violence, racism and religious bigotry. Professor Emanuel Noy-Meir, from Hebrew University, in Qazrin to show solidarity with the Golan residents, contrasts them with "a few hundred Jews in Hebron who went there against the national consensus and expect the army to defend them."

He says: "I am not a rightist. I have campaigned for the rights of Arabs in Israel and bedouin in the south. I am in favour of the rights of minorities, of which the Golan settlers are one." Nevertheless, there is no doubt about where the settlers are looking primarily for support. Most of the 620 buses bringing people to the Golan yesterday were hired by parties of the nationalist and religious right.

Also planting his tree was General Rafael Eitan, leader of the second largest right-wing party, Tsomet, who has just

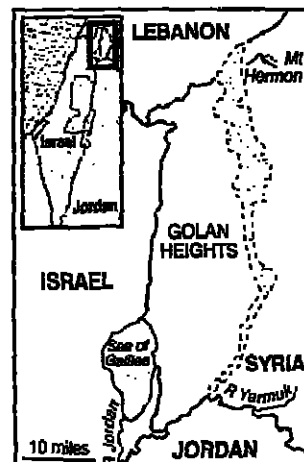
dropped his own bid for the premiership. A short, muscular man — he led the less than successful Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 — he said: "The Golan will be the central issue in the election."

He has decided that Tsomet, a secular nationalist party, will form an electoral block with Likud, the main party of the right. The reason is desperation on the right and General Eitan's belief that only if it unites can it prevent a victory by Mr Peres and Labour. In the election for Prime Minister General Eitan would only have siphoned off

votes from Binyamin Netanyahu, the leader of Likud, who already trails Mr Peres by 16 per cent in the polls.

The Prime Minister and the Knesset (parliament) will be elected separately this year.

Many Labour party supporters oppose withdrawal. Also at Qazrin yesterday was Avigdor Kahalani, the tank commander who defended the Golan against Syrian attack in 1973, and is now leading a breakaway Labour faction in the Knesset called the Third Way, which rejects giving up the Heights.



Mr Peres has tried to defuse the opposition by promising a referendum on peace with Syria, but the settlers suspect — almost certainly rightly — that the election in May provides their best chance of staying where they are.

## Sudan vows to step up 'terrorist' hunt

DAVID ORR  
Khartoum

Sudan is to intensify its search for three suspects wanted in connection with the attempted assassination of the Egyptian President, Hosni Mubarak, last year. If found on Sudanese territory, they will be arrested and extradited, Ali Osman Mohammed Taha, the country's Foreign Minister, said yesterday.

His assurances come in the wake of a UN Security Council resolution demanding that Sudan hand over three Egyptians suspected of trying to kill President Mubarak in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, last June.

Sudan's Islamic regime has for a long time been accused by the West, particularly the United States, of training and harbouring terrorists. Since the attack on President Mubarak, Sudan's relations with Egypt and Ethiopia have deteriorated dramatically.

"We are putting more effort into demonstrating our seriousness in conducting this search," the influential minister told the *Independent* yesterday.

"We are taking some measures which will be made public in a day or two. What else can we do? We have been given an impossible mission."

The Khartoum government of Lieutenant-General Omar Has-

san al-Bashir, which has consistently denied any involvement in the assassination attempt, has been given 60 days by the UN to hand over the three suspects. It admits that one of the three Egyptians named by Ethiopia did enter Sudan after the attack but insists that he did not stay.

"We believe the resolution has been based on unfounded presumptions," said Mr Taha. "We feel we have been unjustly treated on this issue. Sudan is an open country. We have never provided military training for any elements whether they are Egyptians or other nationalities."

Mr Taha said his government would shortly begin a campaign to explain its position. The UN resolution is being seen here as part of an international conspiracy to isolate Sudan and as a prelude to demands for trade sanctions by the US.

The Security Council resolution condemning Sudan was immediately followed by an announcement by the US that it was withdrawing all American personnel from its embassy in Khartoum. Some 30 embassy employees are due to leave the Sudanese capital by the end of this week though the US insists it is not breaking diplomatic relations. A US embassy spokesman yesterday dismissed as "totally coincidental" the fact that the announcement of the withdrawal came at the

same time as the resolution.

"We're suspending our presence out of concern for the safety of our personnel," said the diplomat. "There's been no one development which has prompted our decision. We've had a longstanding concern over Sudan harbouring terrorist groups. It's dangerous for us here and it will continue to be dangerous for as long as the Sudanese government fails to curb the activities of terrorist groups based here."

The US says the threats to its staff come from both Sudanese and "non-Sudanese elements", a catch-all phrase denoting Palestinian and other groups. The US, which has had Sudan on its list of state sponsors of terrorism since 1993, reports the existence in the country of up to 20 terrorist training camps. The camps are said to be moved frequently to outwit spy satellites.

"For some international powers — particularly for the US and Britain — the Islamic attitudes of Sudan pose a threat to their interests," said Mr Taha. "But our interpretation of Islam does not lead to confrontation with the West, it does not lead to violence or terrorism."

Mr Taha admitted that there are many Palestinian and other Arabs based in Sudan but denied they are engaged in military activities. They were leading "normal civilian lives".



Underwater battle: Fireman Don Lopez pulling Marglyn Paseka, 15, from a flooded creek in Santa Rosa, California, after she and a friend, who was also rescued, tried to cross in a dustbin. Marglyn was trapped in the water for 45 minutes

Photograph: Annie Wells/AP

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#### Please complete in block capitals

1. Mr ☐ Mrs ☐ Ms ☐

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

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#### 3. Your personal details

Height: \_\_\_\_\_  
Build: slight ☐ medium ☐ large ☐  
Hair colour: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dress/Looks: casual ☐ fashionable ☐  
elegant ☐ sporty ☐

#### 4. Your work

Present job: \_\_\_\_\_  
Self-employed ☐ employed ☐  
civil servant ☐ manual worker ☐  
part-time ☐ not working ☐  
unemployed ☐ retired ☐

#### Education

O levels / GCSE's ☐ A levels ☐  
Further Education ☐ University ☐  
Technical Qualification ☐  
Other: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 5. Your Personality

☐ Affectionate ☐ Fashionable  
☐ Serious ☐ Practical  
☐ Considerate ☐ Conventional  
☐ Shy ☐ Reliable  
☐ Romantic ☐ Adventurous

#### 2. Personal Information

Marital Status: Single ☐ Divorced ☐

Widowed ☐ Separated ☐

Religion: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have children of your own?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, how many live with you? \_\_\_\_\_

#### 6. How would people who know you best describe you?

☐ always ready for a joke  
☐ somewhat dreamy  
☐ never has problems  
☐ takes life a bit too seriously  
☐ not easily upset  
☐ always active  
☐ chatty

#### 7. Your interests

☐ Wine/Dining ☐ Jazz/Folk music  
☐ Pubs ☐ Classical music  
☐ Sports/Keep fit ☐ Theatre/Arts  
☐ Politics/History ☐ Watching TV  
☐ Reading ☐ Smoking  
☐ Travelling ☐ Astrology  
☐ Science/Tech ☐ Children  
☐ Cinema ☐ Homemaking  
☐ Pets/Animals ☐ Gardening  
☐ Pop music ☐ Countryside



#### 8. Details of the partner you would like:

Min. age: \_\_\_\_\_ Max. age: \_\_\_\_\_  
Height: min. \_\_\_\_\_ max. \_\_\_\_\_  
Don't mind ☐  
Marital status: Single ☐ Divorced ☐  
Widowed ☐ Separated ☐  
Don't mind ☐

#### 9. Which of the three pictures do you prefer? (tick the box)

Dept. INP 06

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# They're off! Prize is the planet's top job

With the Republican revolution apparently stalled, Bill Clinton is the early favourite for a second term, writes **Rupert Cornwell**

The campaign for the US presidency began long ago. For some aspirants it began at the very moment Bill Clinton defeated George Bush in 1992. But tonight the real votes of real voters are counted for the first time. Republicans of the state of Louisiana hold caucuses to select the man they think should carry their party's standard against Mr Clinton this autumn. The race for the White House is on.

By the end of the long and tortuous route to election day, thousands of polls will have been taken, millions of miles travelled and hundreds of millions of dollars spent. Finally, on 5 November, nine months almost to the day, America will learn the identity of the president who will lead it from the American Century into the 21st century.

Rarely has a presidential election been harder to read. With the Soviet Union vanished, America is at peace, its diplomatic and military pre-eminence unchallenged, its concerns exclusively domestic. One year ago, Mr Clinton appeared doomed, his Democrats utterly vanquished by Newt Gingrich's Republicans in the mid-term Congressional elections of November 1994. The results seemed to prove that the country had moved decisively rightward; but has it? Can the Republicans complete their conservative revolution by regaining the White House?

In the past 12 months the Republicans, vigorously pursuing their mission to slay Big Government, have seriously overreached themselves.

Mr Clinton, after almost disappearing from view for several months, has re-emerged to play brilliantly on public fears about the future of federal

health programmes, education and the environment. Every sign is that the public believes Mr Gingrich and his men want to go too far, too fast. Contrary to the cherished tenets of their history, Americans are no longer political revolutionaries. Here, as nowhere else, checks and balances are built into the system, and elections won and lost in the centre. This year could prove anew that, for all their complaints about "gridlock" and a government that does not work, Americans secretly prefer that supreme check and balance - a government divided between the major parties.

If he prevails, Mr Clinton will become the first Democrat since Franklin Roosevelt, more than 50 years ago, to be elected for a second term. At this early stage, the President must be favoured, albeit narrowly. Despite the vicissitudes of his three years in power, Mr Clinton is a lucky, as well as an intensely skillful, politician. He is a marvellous campaigner too, a gifted speaker who can trounce in debate any Republican in the lacklustre pack on offer.

Fortunate indeed is a sitting president who faces neither a primary challenger from within his own party nor a charismatic champion from the opposition. Jimmy Carter, the last Democrat to seek re-election, was, on the whole, better loved than Mr Clinton but he lost. He was weakened by an internal challenge from Edward Kennedy in the primaries in the spring and was finished off by the rise of Ronald Reagan in the autumn.

With Mr Clinton, nothing can be counted certain. Nearly half the electorate say they do not trust him. The foibles of his private life are well-documented and his political persona is slip-

pery as ever: the man who ran in 1992 as a "New Democrat" then governed as an old-style liberal Democrat, stole Republican themes by the dozen in his recent State of the Union address. And in the wings, obscure but unpredictable, lurk the confusing but stubborn allegations of financial misconduct in his Arkansas days, known collectively as Whitewater.

But first the focus is on the Republicans as they select their nominee. For all the thunder they have generated on Capitol Hill, the party's storm-troopers have no true representative in the field. Speaker Newt Gingrich, their now-tarnished champion, is not running (too unpopular). Other media favourites, such as General Colin Powell, could not face the sheer nastiness and complexity of the process. Bob Dole, the early favourite for the nomination, is a reluctant revolutionary at best, while Mr Dole's main early challenger, the millionaire publisher Steve Forbes, is not a politician at all. The rest are nowhere.

Two of the over-arching themes of Campaign '96 are clear. One is the basic philosophical argument over the size and role of government. The debate embraces the burning issues of the moment: the clamour for a balanced budget and lower taxes, the unending criticism of Washington and its ways, and the myriad proposals to shift power from the centre to the states.

But an enduring paradox muddies the argument. Much as Americans detest government, they have grown to love the benefits and safety-nets which government offers.

And so to the other leitmotif of this election year, on which few candidates

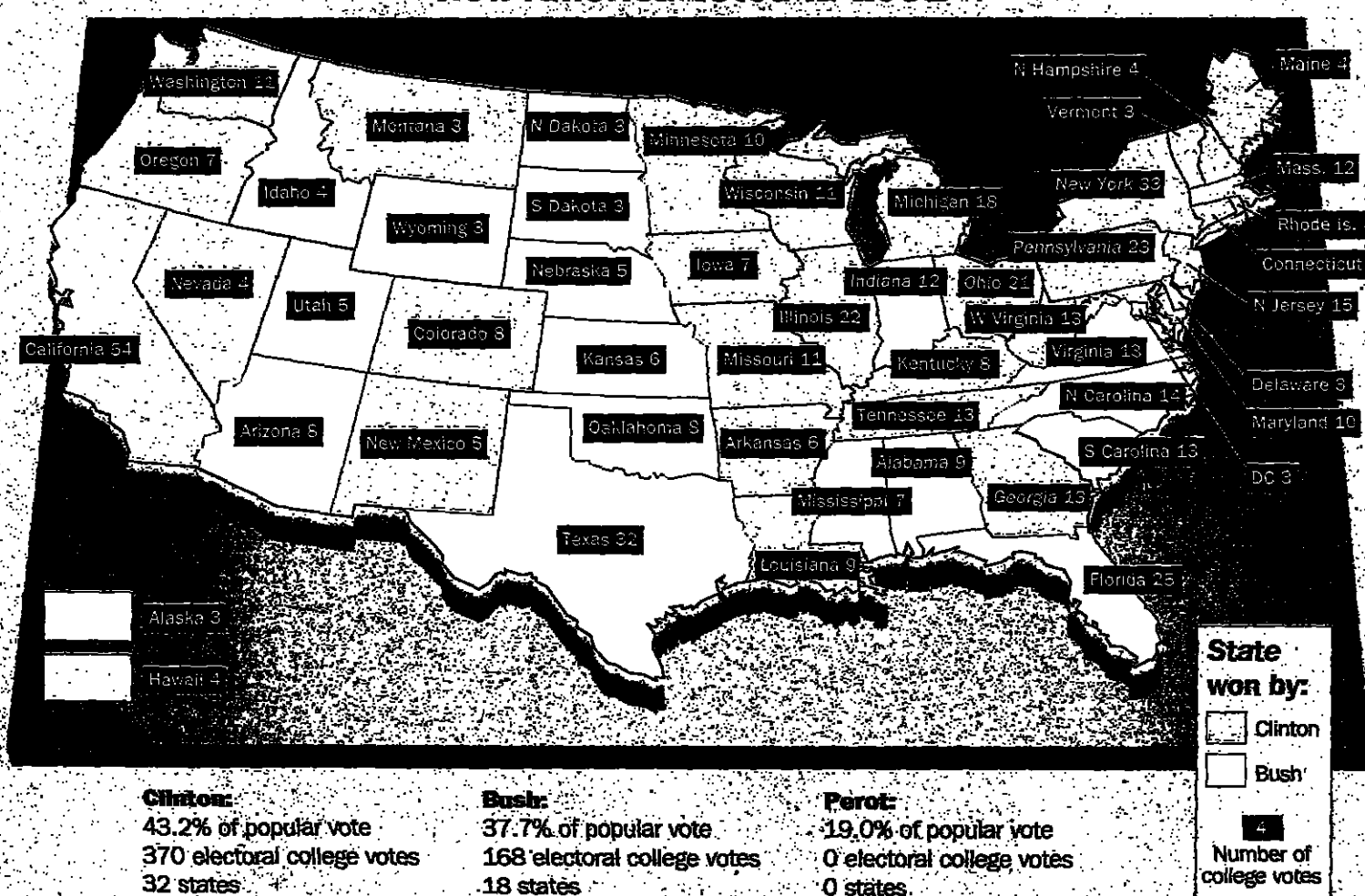
care to dwell. It is fear - more exactly economic fear, deriving from corporate down-sizing, the disappearance of jobs that had been safe for generations, and the dawning realisation that Americans are no longer guaranteed an eternally rising standard of living in which each generation aspires to a more comfortable existence than the last. Wall Street may be booming, but Main Street USA is frightened. The well-heeled novice Steve Forbes prospers because, for a while at least, he can conjure away these concerns with his talk of a flat tax to cure the nation's ills.

Of the other candidates, only Pat Buchanan explicitly addresses the issue, with his call for controls on immigration, and an economic Fortress America.

Now may November's run-off be limited to the contenders of the leading parties. With the Republicans and Democrats having feuded and failed to balance the budget, the opening is there for another millionaire, Ross Perot, who convulsed and then disappointed the nation in 1992, to make another independent run, this time at the head of his own party.

And what happens if Mr Dole folds and the Republicans weary of Mr Forbes? Could they turn to one of the notables who (probably wisely) decided not to subject themselves and their families to the savage ordeal of a Presidential campaign - Jack Kemp, Dick Cheney, or even General Powell, the man with the best chance of beating Mr Clinton? The prospect of a late entrant being brokered into the nomination at the Republican convention is remote, but not impossible. Election 1996 could yet prove to be a rollercoaster.

## How America voted in 1992



## Runners and riders in the White House stakes

### BILL CLINTON

The Perils of Pauline President  
Ladbrokes odds to win in November: 4-7 on

Genzifer Flowers and the Vietnam draft nearly finished him four years ago; now, as primary season rolls around again, it's Hillary, Whitewater and Paula Jones. And yet 1992's self-appointed Comeback Kid somehow wriggles free of every scrape. Written off after the Republican sweep of Congress a year ago, he now starts the campaign odds-on favourite for a second term, having hijacked many of the Republicans' best lines.

No politician can change position faster - and none is better on the stump. At 49, he's younger than all but one of his rivals. His financial war-chest is full, there's not a Democratic challenger in sight, and the Republican field is drabness made flesh. No Democrat has dared challenge him for the party nomination. His own approval ratings are more than 50 per cent, among the best of his presidency.

Forget gays in the military, the health-care reform fiasco - this president has the knack of getting his mistakes out of the way early. Or has he? That's the perverse charm of Bill Clinton: just when he seems to have it made, something crops up. What this time?



### ROBERT DOLE

If he makes it, it will be a triumph of experience over hope  
Ladbrokes odds: 6-4

For 28 years a Senator for Kansas, Bob Dole is the eternal presidential loser. He lost to Gerald Ford's running-mate in 1976, he lost to Ronald Reagan in 1980, to George Bush in 1988, and in 1996 - oh, no - is he going to lose again? A year ago, with Dole at 45 per cent in the polls and the rest nowhere, the very thought seemed impossible. But now he's struggling.

Too old at 72, a creature of Washington, too grumpy and bad-tempered; above all, they say, he's a legislative automaton who can't see beyond the fine print of a congressional continuing resolution. Who needs vision, he told a questioner about his White House plans, "I'm just gonna serve." That is, if he ever gets the chance.

With Steve Forbes snapping at his heels, even overtaking in some New Hampshire polls, the Dole temper could be about to snap too. If so, his White House ambitions are over. But he's got a wife as smart as Hillary Clinton and with twice the poise and for once he's listening to his advisers. And there's that heroic war record, which Dole has barely mentioned. Don't write him off - after all, who else is there?



### STEVE FORBES

Maybe money can buy the White House  
Ladbrokes odds: 8-1

The scion of the Forbes publishing fortune has spent his way into contention for the Republican nomination, preaching a flat tax, a flat tax and... a flat tax. The public persona of Forbes, 48, is of a nice guy with a shy, lopsided smile, positively oozing good cheer and optimism, two qualities at a premium in a sepulchral Republican field.

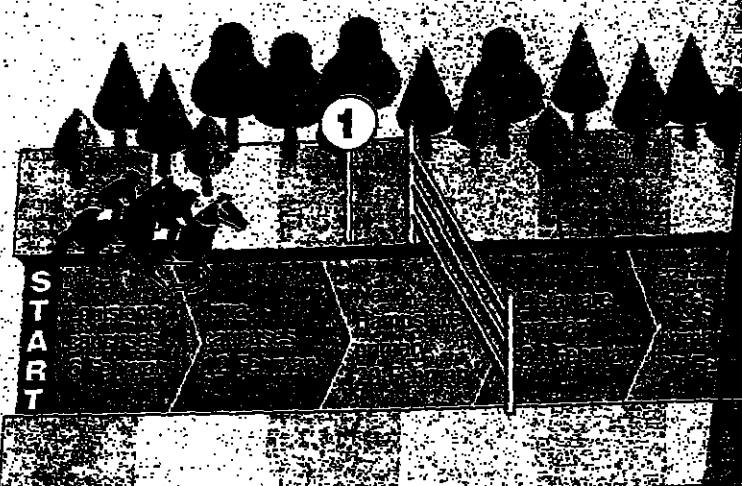
In fact, he's a very serious operator, a family man with five daughters, not quite the son and heir you'd expect of the balloonist, motorbiking hedonist and self-publicist who was Malcolm Forbes Sr. His advisers include former top aides of that right-wing curmudgeon, Senator Jesse Helms of North Carolina. Most of all, he's loaded and is ready to spend it - up to \$25m (£16.5m) of a personal fortune of \$450m, he says. Already he's lashed out \$15m, almost all of it on a ruthless campaign of negative television and radio advertising which has targeted Bob Dole.

Steve Forbes is picking up the millionaire-politician baton dropped (temporarily?) by Ross Perot. He is more thoughtful than the Texan but his political staying power is unproven. Already Forbes Jr is as famous as Forbes Sr, and with much greater reason.



## THE GREAT PRESIDENTIAL RACE

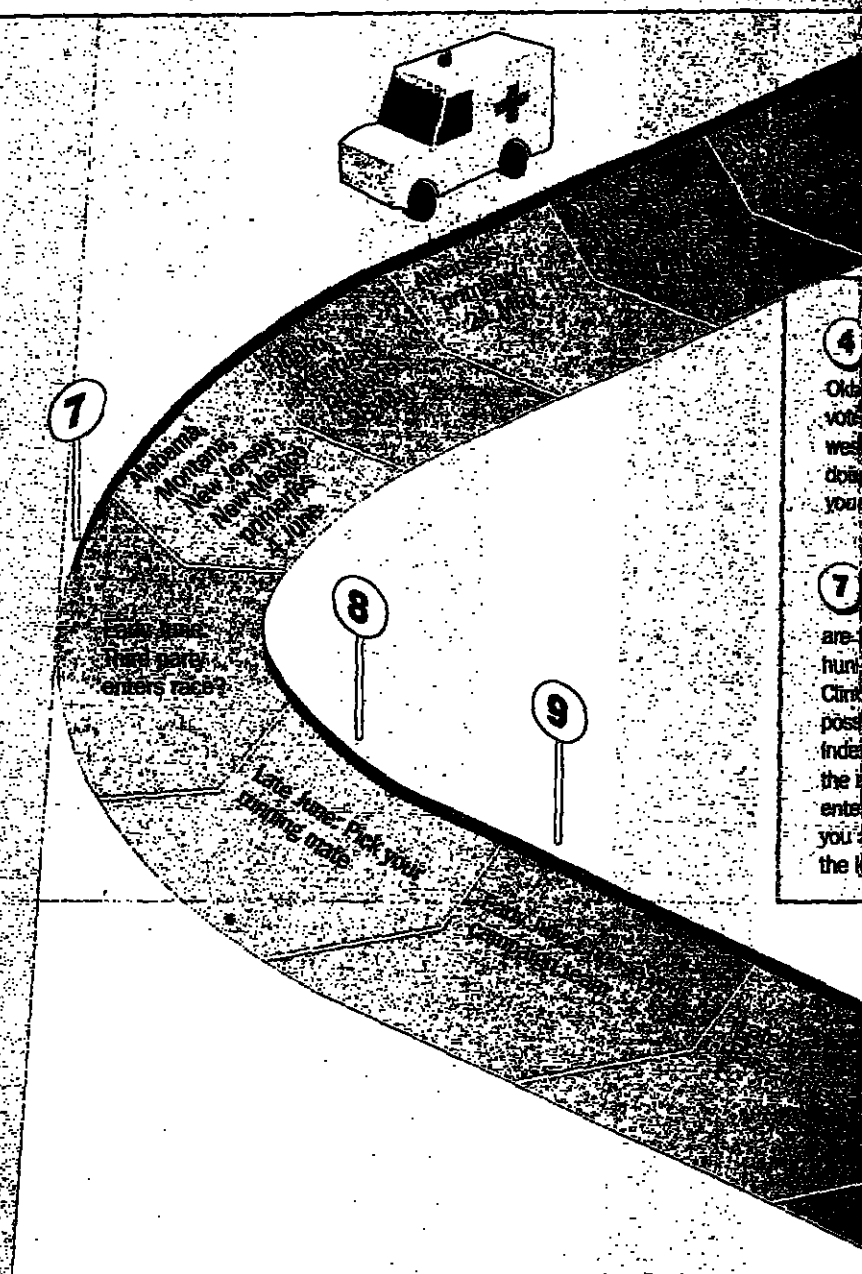
or How To Become Leader



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**2** South Carolina Primary. The first test in the South, which is still a Different Country, whatever Abe Lincoln may have thought. A chance for any right wing stumblers in New Hampshire to recover their spirits.

**3** Iowa Caucus. The first test in the Midwest, which is still a Different Country, whatever Abe Lincoln may have thought. A chance for any right wing stumblers in New Hampshire to recover their spirits.

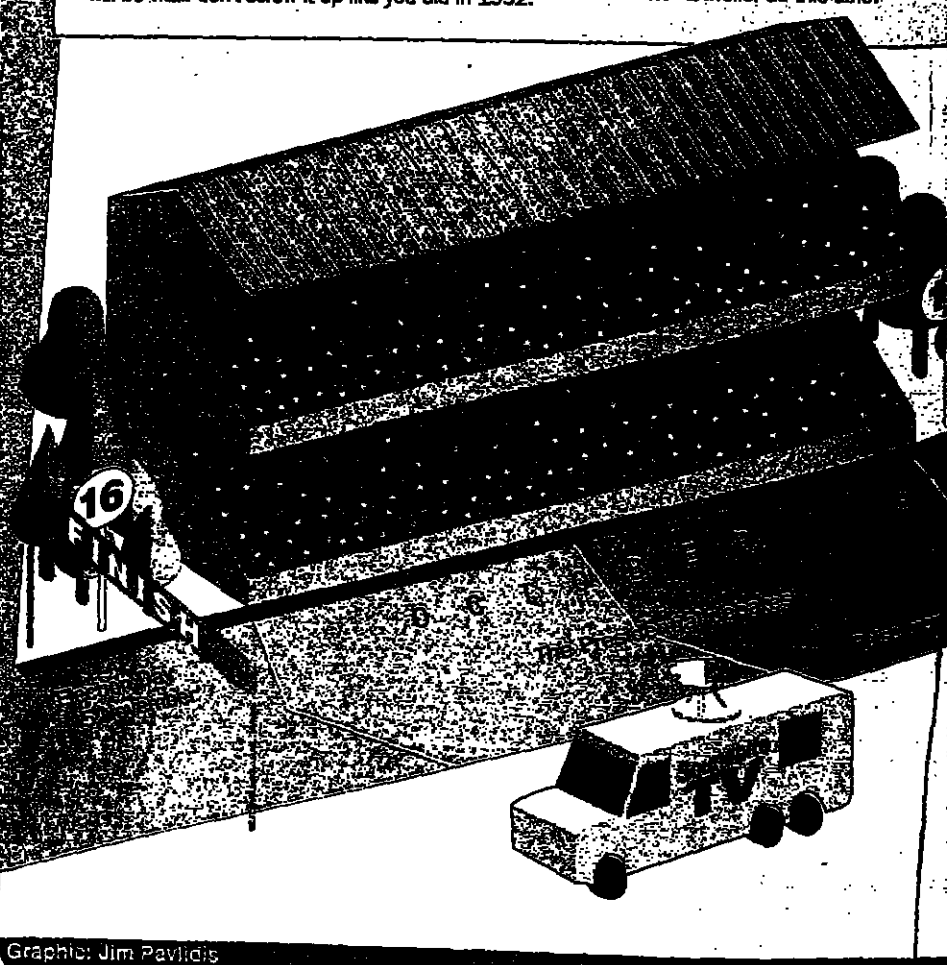


**10** Money raising. If you are Ross Perot or Steve Forbes, jump over this square. If you are anyone else, Bill Clinton included, you have to spend the early summer on the "rubber-chicken circuit" eating disgusting hotel dinners for which you charge \$1,000 a plate. The Federal government covers your campaign expenses in the Autumn; but you need this money for the so-called "soft" expenditure which eludes the official limits.

**11** The Republican Convention. Clinton or a Third Party candidate, if you are the Republican elect, this looks like a simple one. In 1992 it became your Becker's Brook. In 1996 it became a parade of far-right, fundamentalist intolerance, which destroyed George Bush.

**12** The Democratic Convention. Jump this square unless your name is Clinton. The Democratic convention usually happens in July but it has - lucky for you - been displaced by the Atlanta Olympics. As the campaign proper begins, it will be your red, white and blue balloons floating in the voters' minds. Your speech will be vital: don't screw it up like you did in 1992.

**13** The air war. Almost all voters campaign on TV, during the election. In 1992 it was your favourite sit-com. Excessive out in 1992 because it was your favourite sit-com. Excessive out in 1992 because it was your favourite sit-com. Excessive out in 1992 because it was your favourite sit-com.





## How the system works

# The American way of politics

didates). Only on the second ballot are they free to vote for whichever candidate they like.

All of the above applies, of course, only to the major-party candidates. A well-heeled independent, such as Ross Perot, can join the race at any time and save his energy and money for the final campaign, which traditionally starts on Labour Day (2 September).

The lackluster Republican field has led to speculation that someone else—General Colin Powell?—may be “drafted” by the party (i.e., picked by bosses) at the last moment. This used to be common. As recently as 1968, Hubert Humphrey won the Democratic nomination without entering a single primary.

**What is a primary? What is a caucus?** A primary is a state-wide election in which all registered voters can take part. Caucuses take several forms but consist essentially of meetings throughout the state in which supporters vote by a show of hands or ballot. In some states, such as California, only those registered as Democrats can vote for Democrats and only Republicans can vote for Republicans. In other states, such as New

The tighter rules now make this very difficult, if not quite impossible. On the first ballot at the convention, all delegates must vote according to the primary results in their state (or any deals made to reallocate the delegates of fallen can-

## Finances and funding

# Why money is the first primary

in part from his simple "flat-tax" message, it also comes from projecting himself as a political *ingénu* free of the taint of Washington dirty money.

which evades the official limits and has to be raised from private – mostly business – donors. Failed primary campaigns included, the total cost of this year's race could be well over \$400m, by far the most expensive in American history.

Of the five serious Republican contenders, Mr Gramm provides the most compelling evidence that it is not enough in itself to be a great fund-raiser. It was Mr Gramm who boasted that he had the most "reliable friend in American politics - money".

How much does it cost to be president? Or even to fail to become president? A candidate's overt spending on a primary campaign can be up to \$35m. The federal government funds the cam-

The first lesson of the Forbes fairy story, on the other hand, is that if you can afford to blitz the airwaves with campaign advertising impossible dreams might come true. The second lesson is that while Mr Forbes's appeal derives

While Mr Forbes is himself a walking corporation, the advantage he enjoys over his rivals is that he owes no favours to anybody but himself. Mr Dole and Mr Gramm and Mr Alexander have spent the last year scrounging from people who fully expect a reward for their investment. The same goes for Mr Clinton, who has managed to accumulate a campaign war-chest of \$27m. Mr Clinton's decision last month to

## The race for Congress

## The other battlegrounds of 1996

But in 1996 that could change, in one chamber at least on Capitol Hill. Two years ago the Republicans gained 52 seats, to gain control of the House for the first time since Eisenhower's day, a Democratic armageddon seeming to prove America had moved irrevocably to the right. But despite the calamity, the Democrats need a net gain this time to win back the House. With 230,004 Republican majority (the remaining seat is held by an independent). The shift under way in the South from Democrats to Republicans would seem to argue otherwise; but the strident, grating personality of Newt Gingrich, the Speaker, the perceived extremism of his followers and the wrangle over the budget have broken the Republican momentum. The majority of Americans tell pollsters they will vote Democrat for Congress in 1996.

In the Senate the arithmetic is easier for the Democrats, but the reality more difficult. Of the 33 seats up this year, 15 are held by Democrats, 18 by Republicans. To gain parity (and thus

the edge, assuming Mr Clinton wins and Al Gore remains Vice-President, without the tie-breaking vote), the Democrats need just three more seats. Instead, they seem bound to lose three in the South — in Louisiana, Alabama and Arkansas — and conceivably a fourth in Georgia. In New Jersey, Minnesota, Illinois and Michigan they face tough battles.

And then there is the most glamorous Congressional race of all in 1996, in Massachusetts.

In a veritable Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe of politics, the Democrat John Kerry is being challenged by the state's popular Republican Governor, William Weld. Both men owe: case (Weld is married to a descendant of Teddy Roosevelt; Kerry is a scion of a "Boston Brahmin" family). Both are mentioned as future presidential candidates, and both are rich - Weld is a wealthy lawyer; Kerry is married to Teresa Heinz, the grocery heiress, worth an estimated \$650m (£430m). At the start of the year, the polls gave Kerry a slight edge, but the result is a toss-up.

By contrast, most of the 18 Republican-held seats look safer. Intra-party feuding could undermine John Warner in Virginia, while Jesse Helms, that scourge of liberals, gays and foreigners could have trouble in North Carolina. But the real action is just to the South. Can Strom Thurmond, 93 years young, win an eighth term, which, if completed, would on 5 December 2002 make him the first centenary senator in US history? So much for term limits.

At the governors' level, 1996 is a relatively quiet year. Only 11 governorships are up in 1996, the most important of them in Indiana, Washington state, Missouri and North Carolina—all held by Democrats. Jim Hunt, the longest-serving governor in the US, looks impregnable in North Carolina, as does Mel Carnahan in Missouri.

But in Indiana and Washington, the Republicans have clear opportunities to increase their current 30-19 grip on the nation's statehouses (Maine's governor is an independent).

**RUPERT CORNWELL**

## Runners and riders in the White House stakes

**PAT BUCHANAN**  
Eloquent anger can take you only so far in politics  
Ladbrokes odds: 100-1

**PHIL GRAMM**  
Living proof that in politics, charm is unnecessary  
Ladbrokes odds: 14-1

On paper, the ex-governor of Tennessee and much-admired Education Secretary in the Bush administration, 55 years young, dazzling pianist and happy warrior against Washington, is the most attractive candidate in the field and, many believe, the one with the best chance of beating Bill Clinton in November.

His views are conservative but undogmatic. Alexander is a forthright budget-balancer but not a flat-taxer. But his striving for the common touch (he really did walk across New Hampshire in his trademark red-and-black plaid shirt to meet ordinary voters) is apt to make him look a lightweight fraud. He is under-

**The 57-year-old conservative commentator and former Nixon/Reagan speechwriter earned his niche in election history four years ago.**

Arguably, his challenge in the primaries scared George Bush out of the presidency, forcing the Republicans rightward and allowing Bill Clinton to seize the middle ground and win. Now the lovable old bruiser is at it again.

Charming and caustic as ever, he excoriates Naf-ta (the North American Free Trade Area), and foreigners of every hue, lambasts gun control and is courting the religious right with the toughest anti-abortion stance. Pat may be preening himself after his victory in last week's Alaska straw poll: he may do very

Even his wife, Wendy Lee, admits she couldn't stand him the first time he approached her. But Phil Gramm, 53, is nothing if not persistent. He won Wendy, won a seat in Congress as a Southern Democrat, switched to the Republicans, moved on to the Senate and won bigger still.

With his peering turtle's eyes and harsh Texas drawl, he will never make the White House on looks or laughs. But no one can hammer an issue like Gramm — right now the balanced budget. He also has the thickest skin in Congress and the sharpest eye for public hypocrisy. No hypocrisy is too rank for Gramm in the pursuit of electoral office, and the most dangerous place on Capitol Hill, runs the joke, is between Phil Gramm and a television camera. He boasts money, good staff and a strati-



egy; survive in Iowa and  
New Hampshire, do  
well in Arizona and  
Delaware, and  
then clean up in  
the South and  
West, where his  
austere econ-  
omic conser-  
vatism plays  
well. But isn't  
there enough  
of that in  
Newt Gin-  
grich's Congress  
already? Phil  
Gramm is surely  
another  
Mr 10 per cent.  
Look for him to  
throw in the  
towel by April  
at the latest.

**14** The ground war: For all the dominance of TV, reaching out to the voters is still considered vital. In the final two months, you will be in perpetual motion between California, Ohio, Illinois, Michigan, New York - the 20 or so states where the presidency will be won or lost. Why bother going to Akron, Ohio or Kalamazoo, Michigan? In truth, it is mostly to get the free exposure on local TV stations.

**15** The debates. This is when you can lose the presidency with one slip of the tongue or one glance at your watch (as George Bush did in 1992, betraying a kind of anxious arrogance). Actually, their importance is overrated but they do make riveting TV. If you are Bill Clinton, you are in your element.

16 a) You have lost. You sink into  
obscurity and a morass of  
unpaid campaign bills.  
b) You have won. Your troubles are  
just beginning.



## obituaries/gazette

## Shamus Culhane

"Heigh-ho! Heigh-ho! It's home from work we go!" sang the seven little men as they marched through the forest and over a fallen tree after a hard day's dig in their diamond mine. All except Dopey, the last in line. "He don't talk none," explained Doc the dwarf. He don't talk none," he never tried!" Walt Disney's first feature-length cartoon, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1938), meant so much to me as a boy cartoonist that I knew it by heart, singing myself to sleep as I re-ran it in my mind's-eye movie palace night after night. What I never knew were the names of the animators whose magic pens drew that wonderful film. We need more cartoonists among our film critics.

Shamus Culhane was the animator responsible for that long walk home, perhaps the last of the great cartoonists who pioneered the 20th-century art of the animated film, working his way from boy assistant right through to writer/director, from short film to features to television series.

James Culhane (the Shamus came later) was born in Ware, Massachusetts, in 1908. When the family moved to Manhattan, Mr Culhane took his six-year-old son Jimmy to the local vaudeville theatre, where he saw the miracle of drawings come to life. On stage came the small figure of a famous cartoonist, Winsor McCay, who showed a huge cartoon picture that suddenly moved. This was the star of his 1914 film *Gertie the Dinosaur* who not only did whatever stunt he ordered, she seemed to pluck a pumpkin from his hand and eat it.

Inspired to become a comic artist, young Jimmy entered the annual art contest held by Wanamaker's department store and won a silver medal; 5,999 other children were disappointed. This was 1919, and Jimmy had just turned 11. From elementary school he went to the Vocational School for Boys in Harlem, the only one in the city with a course in commercial art. But his father ran away from home, and Jimmy left school early at 16 to help with the family income. A classmate lent him a hand: Mike Lantz, a youth with ambitions to be a sculptor, took him to see his older brother Walter. They showed him some of Jimmy's cartoons and Walter Lantz, then the 22-year-old chief of the Bray Animation Studio, immediately gave him a job, as an office boy. It was the first step to a career in animated cartoons that would span some 60 years.

Culhane learned the thrill of seeing his static drawings come alive on the screen when he was given the chance to animate a short sequence showing a monkey wrestling with a hot towel. At 16 he was, he said, "the happiest animator in New York". The happiness was short-lived: the Bray studio suddenly closed and the staff were on the streets. Culhane immediately applied to the nearby Harrison-Gould Studio, who made Krazy Kat cartoons, based on the newspaper strip by George Herriman. They admired the neatness of Culhane's samples and signed him up. The pay was \$35 a week, \$10 more than Bray had paid him. Culhane, who had been considering leaving animation, quickly changed his



The seven dwarfs on the march in *Snow White* (1938). The film was Disney's biggest ever gamble and Culhane's first job for the studio

mind. However his new career as an inker and gag man was somewhat spoiled by the studio's cut-price methods. Their films were padded by repeat actions. "If you had a gag where somebody was hit by something, you automatically had it happen three times, using the same drawings over again!" Then came a shock that rocked the industry. Walt Disney showed his first cartoon with a soundtrack, *Steamboat Willie* (1928), starring Mickey Mouse. The Krazy Kat company scoffed, but a year later succumbed to the talkie craze and made their first attempt. "It sounded like a tornado in a boiler factory," Culhane recalled. "When the Kat blinked, some-

body struck a cowbell. When she walked her footsteps were accented by a bass drum. It was sheer cacophony!" In 1930 the studio moved to Hollywood and left Culhane behind. He walked round to the Fleischer Brothers studio, which was offered \$50 a week. Max, the genial producer, appeared at the start of every *Out of the Inkwell* cartoon, drawing Koko the Clown. His brother Dave, the director, dressed in clown's costume and via Max's invention, the Rotoscope, was turned into the cartoon. "Dave was a great gag man. His motto was a gag in every foot or rather, it suited the storyline or not," said Culhane. When rumours of impending closure were whis-

pered, many of Fleischer's top animators quit. Max immediately promoted all his trainees, including Culhane, into full animators, trying them out on a musical, *Swing You Sinners* (1930). When it was premiered it stole the reviews from Eddie Cantor, one critic calling it "a gem of a cartoon". Culhane stayed at Fleischer's for some while, working on the saucy series of shorts starring Betty Boop, the big-eyed boopie girl based on the popular singer Helen Kane. He particularly enjoyed drawing Betty's long legs and daintily nipped butt. "Betty was a good girl," he recalled, "with a hymen like a boilerplate!" Culhane's career covered al-

most every studio in the book. In 1932 he went west to work for Ubbe Iwerks, Disney's top animator who had set up on his own. Here Culhane animated Flip the Frog and Willie Whopper, plus some delightful Comcolor cartoons including *Puss in Boots* (1934). He was flown to London to meet Alexander Korda, who wanted him to set up an animation studio for his London Film Company. Unfortunately for history the money was not good enough and Culhane flew home. Next came work at the Van Beuren company, back in New York. In charge was Burt Gillett, which was enough to lure Culhane. Gillett was renowned in the industry as the uncredited

director of Disney's *Three Little Pigs* (1933), which had become the world's best-known and most seen cartoon. Culhane worked on several of their *Rainbow Parade* series.

In 1935 he joined the Disney studio, which was burgeoning. Wanting to be part of the world's greatest animation studio at any cost, he took an enormous salary cut, virtually starting afresh at \$50 a week. But even he was dismayed when Disney's report on his trial work included, "He should start all over and learn our way." His first attempt at animating Pluto, Mickey's pup, leaping over a fence was unceremoniously thrown in the waste-paper basket. Eventually he succeeded with a scene between Pluto and a cocky crab in *Hawaiian Holiday* (1937). The short won an award and Disney moved Culhane on to his studio's biggest ever gamble, the feature-length *Snow White*, where his first job was devising the dwarfs' musical march from diamond mine to cottage home.

*Snow White's* success inspired the Fleischer brothers to set up a brand new studio in Florida where they embarked on their own feature cartoon, *Culhane's Travels* (1939). Culhane rejoined the brothers to work on this film, then became a full director at last with a short starring the popular spinach-eating sailor, *Popeye Meets William Tell* (1940). Next he directed the opening sequence of *Mr Bug Goes To Town* (1941), the Fleischer's second and final feature film, released in the UK as *Hoppy Goes To Town*. Culhane now rejoined his first ever boss, Walter Lantz,

who was having great success with his new and zany cartoon star, Woody Woodpecker. After directing *Puss the Biscuits Misanthrope* (1943), he was given Woody to direct in a classical music parody, *The Barber of Seville* (1944). In this, Lantz's most expensive short (cost \$16,717), Culhane applied live action editing methods he had studied in Pudovkin's classic book *Film Technique*. With Woody's ever faster rendition of the *Facetious* song, and ever more insane haircutting, the film became Culhane's masterpiece.

By 1966 Culhane was senior enough a figure to lease the Paramount-Famous Studios in New York, where he supervised the production of 20 cartoon shorts, and entered the expanding world of children's television with a series called *The Mighty Four*. There were commercials for Ajax, the Roaming Cleaner and a parody of *Mae West for Muriel Cigarettes*. "Come up and smoke me sometime!" Ten years later he was producing animation specials for ABC Television, including *The Last of the Red Hot Dragons*. This was his final cartoon. In 1986 he wrote his autobiography, *Talking of Animals and Other People*, a veritable history of cartoon films and their animators.

Culhane married twice. His first wife was Maxine Marx, the daughter of Chico Marx.

Dennis Gifford

James (Shamus) Culhane, animator, born Ware, Massachusetts 12 November 1908; twice married (two sons); died New York 2 February 1996.

## Sir Archibald Ross

Archibald Ross ended a distinguished diplomatic career as ambassador first to Portugal, from 1961 to 1966, and then to Sweden, from 1966 to 1971. He was in many ways typical of the old style of diplomat but none the less effective for it.

His father had been in the Indian Civil Service and there was a strong family tradition of government service. Archie was a scholar of Winchester and of New College, Oxford, where he took Firsts in Mods and Greats and won the Gaisford Prize for Greek Verse; he also won the Laming Travelling Fellowship at Queen's. When he took the pre-war Foreign Office examination in 1936, he passed in top.

His diplomatic career was somewhat narrow in the sense that he served always in the Foreign Office or in regular em-

bassies abroad in Europe or the Middle East. He never served in a post involving multilateral diplomacy or in Washington or Paris, nor did he ever go further east than Iran. So he served successively at Stockholm, Tehran and Rome, with intervening periods in London in increasingly senior capacities until his appointment as ambassador to Lisbon at the age of 50. After five years there he was happy to spend his final five years as ambassador at Stockholm.

I served with and under Archie Ross in Rome 40 years ago. I could not have had a more agreeable and helpful colleague, generous in his support and available to give advice from his much greater experience. He could be counted on to carry out his instructions with care and accuracy and to

promote British policies persuasively. Before coming to Rome as Minister (no 2) he had been head of the Eastern Department of the Foreign Office, a very demanding job at the time of our then difficulties with Iran. Rome was no doubt a reward for his success in that department and he and his wife, Mary, herself something of a paragon as an ambassador who preserved her good looks to an advanced age, enjoyed their time there, entertaining in an elegant little house overlooking the baths of Caracalla. Archie played a useful role over Trieste in the inter-regnum between Victor Mallet and Ashley Clarke. Later when he was an under-secretary at the Foreign Office he could chalk up a success over Cyprus in 1959.

Ross was regarded by some

as ultra-conventional. He was indeed extremely correct in his demeanour and appearance on all official occasions. Nor did he fail to show all the minor old-fashioned courtesies which form part of diplomatic intercourse. But he was not without humour – sometimes concealed well beneath the surface – and he responded to teasing about his addiction to protocol.

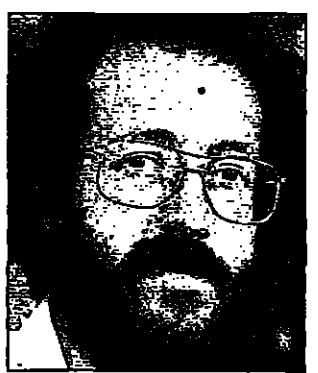
I used to see Archie Ross at least once a year at the annual service of the Order of St Michael and St George in St Paul's Cathedral. His loud "Amen" after the prayer for members of the order reflected his own beliefs. I cannot imagine him enjoying any career other than service to the Crown. His sense of duty was immensely strong.

Alan Campbell

## Roy Cuthbertson

Fertilisation of the egg is said to be the only aspect of cell biology familiar to the lay person. But how, precisely, does a sperm swim on the egg, a thousand-fold bigger, to start the cell divisions that result in formation of the early embryo? Roy Cuthbertson showed in 1985 that the sperm induces the egg to generate a series of brief rises in the calcium level in the egg; these calcium "spikes" are a mandatory signal for egg development.

Just two weeks ago, a few days after Cuthbertson's death, a London group reported in the scientific journal *Nature* that they had identified a protein which is injected into the egg by the sperm and which is responsible, somehow, for initiating the calcium spiking.



Cuthbertson: spiking

Cuthbertson's 1985 discovery, also published in *Nature*, was fundamental to the identification of the sperm protein.

Roy Cuthbertson was born in 1954 and educated at Tonbridge and King's College,

Cambridge, where he read Mathematics; he then took an MSc in Genetics at University College London. He began his research career with D.G. Whittingham in the Mammalian Development Unit at UCL.

He gained his doctorate in 1981 and after a year at Harvard came to Liverpool University determined to take on the technical challenge of measuring the egg's calcium levels during fertilisation. He used an extract from a luminous jellyfish that glowed when given calcium. By injecting this extract into an egg and measuring the glow from the egg with light-detecting instruments he showed that a fertilised egg generates about 12 brief spikes in its calcium level over the three-hour period af-

ter the sperm binds. A year later, with Niall Woods and myself, he used the same technique to show, much to everyone's surprise (except his own), that a liver cell responds to several hormones by generating calcium spikes. In these cells the calcium spiking switches on the release of glucose into the bloodstream, not cell division.

This work, again published in *Nature*, firmly established his reputation in cell signalling internationally and he was awarded a Royal Society 1983 University Research Fellowship.

Cuthbertson had the intellect, confidence and determination to forge his own path in science; not for him the easy next step, or following the latest fashionable topic. All he lacked was

time, as the leukaemia which he had battled against for several years overwhelmed him.

Roy Cuthbertson was a cellist with the Chester Philharmonic Orchestra, and an active campaigner for the Green Party. His concern for the planet's problems befitted a scientist who contributed much to our understanding of the cellular events that initiate human procreation.

Peter Cobbold

Kevin Steward Roy Cuthbertson, cell biologist and mathematician; born Sevenoaks 2 May 1954; Royal Society 1983 University Research Fellow, Liverpool University 1987-96; married Anne Tebb (one son, one daughter); died Liverpool 11 January 1996.



Ross: sense of duty

Archibald David Manisty Ross, diplomat; born 12 October 1911; HM Minister, Rome 1953-56; CMG 1953, KCMG 1961; Assistant Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs 1956-60; Ambassador to Portugal 1961-66; Ambassador to Sweden 1966-71; married 1939 Mary Macfadyen (one son, one daughter, and one son deceased); died 25 January 1996.

## Bernard Phillips

Bernard Phillips was for more than a generation a doyen of the insolvency profession.

The youngest of five children, he was raised by his Jewish immigrant parents in the East End of London. Whilst medicine fascinated him, perhaps as a result of his tuberculosis as a child, economic necessity had him articled at 16 and a chartered accountant at 21. He joined his elder brother, Percy, and built an accounting practice that, by the 1950s, represented to the business community of the West End what Kenneth and Norman Cork's practice, Cork Gully, represented to the City. In his early practising years Phillips decided to wear clear spectacles because he appeared too young for his qualifications and evident ability.

During the 1950s and 1960s the burgeoning fashion industry had many casualties, but there were few of its members who did not receive voluntarily, or otherwise, the benefits of the skills of the Phillips brothers, two of the first company doctors. Bernard Phillips's enduring contribution was to the institutionalisation of a small group of accountants specialising in insolvency work. He recognised the need to co-ordinate the skills and learning of a few unregulated specialists into a dynamic professional body. His determination to excise any "cowboy" elements and develop a respected next generation of practitioners was visionary.

In 1982 he was uniquely honoured with the presidency of the Insolvency Practitioners Association having just a few years earlier been its chairman. He was largely responsible for protecting the multi-disciplinary insolvency profession from an attempted

takeover by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, a misguided power play which he sensed would always remain a threat. Paradoxically, earlier in his career he had resisted pressure to become a barrister so as not to lose his valued chartered accountancy qualification – a sacrifice that today would no longer be necessary.

Bernard Phillips and Company was the stable which trained many of today's leading insolvency practitioners, including John Talbot at Arthur Andersen, Chris Morris at Touche Ross and Phillips's own son Peter at Buchler Phillips. In 1979 his firm joined Arthur Andersen to form that international organisation's first insolvency division. In Ian Hay Davison, Arthur Andersen's then managing partner, Bernard Phillips found a kindred spirit; pioneering, creative, forceful and articulate. The Law Society regularly sent its members to watch Phillips conduct meetings of creditors to hone their public speaking skills.

Phillips's contributions extended well beyond those to his profession. In his early years as a formidable atheist intellect and powerful orator and debater, he was a member of the Hampstead Parliament (a debating society), once famously having taken on the role of the Communist Chancellor of the Exchequer presenting his Budget.

For many years he worked for the Peckham Settlement, with Lady Howe of Aberavon and Maureen Davison. The settlement runs a community centre for local residents in Peckham, south London, including a low-price nursery, pensioners club and advice centre. Phillips also did voluntary work for the Mary

Ward Settlement in Bloomsbury, offering financial advice at weekly surgeries.

Retirement from Arthur Andersen at the age of 74 gave him time, much of which he committed to two Sussex charities, the Lionel House Trust (a home for young people), of which he was a founder, and Worthing Victim Support, of which he was immediate past chairman.

An active man in every respect, Bernard Phillips was jet-setting in his beloved Cyprus on his 80th birthday, he attended



Phillips: articulate

his last Labour Party Conference in October last year and performed on a local stage at Ferring, West Sussex, in lycra leggings only three weeks before his death.

G. A. Weiss

Bernard Phillips, insolvency practitioner; born Liverpool 7 October 1914; senior partner, Bernard Phillips and Company 1952-82; senior insolvency consultant, Arthur Andersen 1982-88; President, Insolvency Practitioners Association 1982; married 1938 Pat Clayton (one son, one daughter; marriage dissolved 1963); 1964 Lillian Taverdale (two daughters); died Worthing 24 January 1996.

## Births, Marriages &amp; Deaths

## BIRTHS

DOWNES: On 31 January, to Carol (née Fox) and Nick, a son, Jack.

## DEATHS

FEUDENBERG: Elisabeth (née Labowsky), at Peanant Nursing Home, Somerset, wife of the late Konrad Feudenberg, mother of Elizabeth, Matthew, Anna and Veronica. Service at Taunton Deane Crematorium on Thursday 8 February at 2.30pm. Donations if desired to Oxfam. Enquiries to E. White & Son Ltd, Funeral Directors, Taunton, telephone 01232 272183.

MORRISON: Lady Morrison, Rosemary (Hannah Mary), formerly de Groot, nee Topping, aged 82, in Oxford, after a short illness, 4 February 1996. Widow of Sir Nicholas Morrison KCB, and of Emily H.L. de Groot, and dearly loved mother of Joanna and Lucy.

## FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS

RUSSELL-COBB: Trevor. Funeral at Golders Green Crematorium, Wednesday 7 February, 12.30pm, and as previously announced.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, telephoned to 0171-293 2011 or faxed to 0171-293 2010.

## Birthdays

The Right Rev Edwin Barnes, Bishop Suffragan of Richmond, 61 Mr Mike Burt, composer and arranger, 66; Rabbi Lionel Blue, broadcaster, 66; Mr Nicholas Brent, Editor, *Radio Times*, 46; Sir Denis Buckley, former Lord Justice of Appeal, 90; Mr Peter Cadbury, former company chairman, 78; Mr Leslie Crowther, comedian and quizmaster, 63; Mr John Flemming, Warden, Wadham College, Oxford, 55; Miss Zsa Zsa Gabor, actress, 76; Mr Tom Harris, ambassador to Korea, 51; Dr Christopher Hill, former Master, Balliol College, Oxford, 84; Miss Gayle Huanicuit, actress, 53; Professor Nevill Johnson, Reader in the Comparative Study of Institutions, Oxford University, 67; Mr Patrick McNew, actor, 74; Mr George Mudge MP 51; Mr Denis Narden, writer and broadcaster, 74; Mr Manuel Orantes, tennis player, 47; Mr Ronald Reagan, former US president, 85; Lord Redfll, former Lord of Appeal in Ordinary, 85; Mr Mark Shindler, solicitor, and former president, Law Society of England and Wales, 65; Mr Brian Simpson, MEP 43; Mr Jimmy Tarbuck, comedian, 56; Mr Fred Truman, cricketer, 66; Mr Keith Waterhouse, writer, 67; Mr Kevin Whately, actor, 45.

## Anniversaries

Births: Christopher Marlowe, playwright, 1564; Mrs Isabella Mary Beeton (Mayson), cookery writer, 1865; George Herman ("Babe") Ruth, baseball player, 1895; Constantin Truffaut, film director, 1932; Deshaun King Charles II, 1685; Lancelotti "Capability" Brown, landscape garden-

er, 1783; Gustav Klimt, painter, 1918; Arthur Ashe, tennis player, 1930. On this date: James II acceded to the throne of Great Britain, 1685; an Act of Parliament granted votes for British women over 30, 1918; Queen Elizabeth II succeeded to the throne, 1952; agreement was reached between Britain and France on a Channel Tunnel, 1964. Today is the National Day of New Zealand and the Feast Day of St Amand, St Germaine of Palestine, St Hildegard, Saints Mel and Melchior, St Paul Miki and his Companions and St Vedast or Vast.

## Lectures

Victoria and Albert Museum: David Anderson, "Narrative Art in the Middle Ages", 2.30pm. Tate Gallery: Jan Marsh, "Black Images in Pre-Raphaelite Painting", 1pm.

Highgate Literary and Scientific Institution, London N6: John Mead, "What Agenda for Our Children?", 7.45pm. RIBA Architecture Centre, London W1: Mario Bellini, "Urban Islands – architectural works of Mario Bellini", 6.30pm.

Exeter University: Professor Michael Rush, "From Gentlemen to Players: changing career patterns and roles of MPs", 1.10pm. London School of Economics, London WC2: Gwyn Davies, "Is European Monetary Union Feasible or Desirable by 1999?", 5.30pm. Graham College, Barnard's Inn Hall, London EC1: Professor Peter Hennessy, "Centre Forward, Centre Half Harold Wilson 1964-70, 1974-76", 1pm.

## Lavinia, Duchess of Norfolk

A Service of Thanksgiving for the life of Lavinia, Duchess of Norfolk LG will be held in the Cathedral of Our Lady and St Philip Howard, Arundel, at 2.30pm, on Friday 1 March 1996. Admission is by ticket only. Please apply to the Dover House, Poking, Arundel, West Sussex BN18 9PX, by 12 February 1996.

## Luncheons

Ministry of Defence Field Marshal Sir Peter Inge, Chief of the Defence Staff, was the host at a luncheon held yesterday in Admiralty House, London SW1, in honour of Admiral Antonio Carlos Fuzeta da Ponte, Chief of Defence General Staff, Portugal.

Royal Over-Seas League Dr Alan Skold, Leader, UK Independence Party, spoke at a meeting of the Royal Over-Seas League's Discussion Circle held yesterday evening at Over-Seas House, London SW1. His subject was "Could Britain Afford to be Independent Today?"

## ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Prince of Wales visits the "Design of the Future" exhibition and attends a "Century Dinner" at the Royal College of Art, London SW7. The Duke of Kent attends a reception for the "Thames Gateway" at the Royal College of Art, London SW7. Princess Alexandra visits the Chelsea Hospital, Richmond, Surrey. Changing of the Guard The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment leads the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am.

## Infested cargo was dangerous to other ships

## LAW REPORT

6 February 1996

Effort Shipping Co Ltd v London Management SA and another: Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Hirst, Lord Justice Morritt and Lord Justice Ward); 30 January 1996

A cargo of processed nuts infested at shipment with a tropical beetle of voracious appetite was, in terms of article IV, rule 6 of the Hague Rules, "dangerous" to other feedstuff cargoes in the same vessel so as to make the shipper liable to the carrier for damages arising out of the need to destroy the infested cargo and fumigate the ship.

The Court of Appeal dismissed an appeal by the second defendant shipper, Sonacos, against the decision of Mr Justice Longmore ([1994] 2 Lloyd's Rep 171) that it was liable to the plaintiff shipowner, Effort Shipping Co Ltd, for damages of \$477,848.38 plus interest.

Edmond Broadbent (Richards Butler) for the shipper, Allain Schiff (Benleys Shippers & Lowless) for the plaintiff.

Lord Justice Hirst said the action arose out of the shipment of a cargo of ground-nut ex-

traction meal pellets by the shipper at Dakar in Senegal, for carriage to Rio Haina in the Dominican Republic, in one hold of the plaintiff's vessel *Gianis NK*. The bill of lading incorporated the Hague Rules. The ship was carrying two cargoes of wheat pellets in other holds.

The ground-nut cargo was at the time of shipment infested with *Khapra Beetle* (*Trogoderma granarium* Evans) which in its larval form was voracious and would rapidly devour a cargo of feedstuffs. As a result, the cargo was rejected at destination and both the ground-nuts and the wheat pellets eventually had to be dumped at sea and the ship chemically fumigated, causing loss and delay to the plaintiff.

The judge concluded that the shipper was liable under article IV, rule 6 of the Hague Rules, which provided: Goods of an inflammable, explosive or dangerous nature to the shipment whereof the carrier... has not consented... may at any time before discharge be landed in any place or destroyed or rendered innocuous by

the carrier without compensation, and the shipper of such goods shall be liable for all damages and expenses directly or indirectly arising out of or resulting from such shipment.

The plaintiff had claimed that the ground-nut cargo was dangerous not only to the wheat cargoes, as the judge held, but also to the ship itself, which the judge rejected.

The shipper contended that, in order to qualify, goods must be inherently dangerous, and that was not so here. All that happened was that the United States Department of Agriculture issued a directive giving the owner the choice between removing the cargoes from the United States, returning them all to their country of origin or dumping them at sea 25 miles from shore, and for commercial reasons the plaintiff elected to do the latter. The danger thus flowed not from any inherent danger in the ground-nut cargo but from the plaintiff's choice.

The uncontradicted expert evidence showed that the re-

maining wheat cargo was unsaleable. His Lordship agreed with the plaintiff that the whole cargo, including the wheat, was blighted, and the decision to dump it all was in reality Hobson's Choice. Thus from the moment the ground-nut cargo was subjected to the physical peril of being dumped, and consequently the losses and expenses incurred thereafter by the plaintiff arose from the shipment of the infested cargo.

Where it was necessary to decide the point, His Lordship would have been very reluctant to hold that the infested cargo presented any threat of physical danger to the ship itself, although the chemical fumigation which the ship was required to undergo amounted to more than mere routine cleaning, and did at least temporarily impair its usefulness. In the circumstances, however, the point did not arise.

His Lordship then rejected the shipper's argument that it was divested of liability by virtue of section 1 of the Bills of Lading Act 1855.

Paul Magraith, Barrister

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told  
low  
oil



# A very undiplomatic incident

The top woman in the Foreign Office is leaving. She is very angry. Was she pushed or did she jump? Polly Toynbee reports

## The tale of two embassies

**In Paris** The Paris embassy is Britain's most expensive foreign mission. It was bought in 1814 for £36,000. Close to the Elysée Palace on the Faubourg St Honoré, it costs nearly £17m a year to run. Last year, British visitors to the embassy included three royals, 20 ministers and 57 MPs. The embassy's reputation is not all based on glamour. France has long seen itself as the source of political leadership in Europe, forging the idea of European integration, while Germany provided the economic might. In diplomatic circles it is certainly the choicest place to be an ambassador: the current US ambassador is Pamela Harriman, former wife of Randolph Churchill and the legendary US diplomat Averil Harriman.

**In Bonn** The pre-war British embassy in Berlin was described by the ambassador Sir Neville Henderson in 1938 as "cramped, dirty and dark". Soon after, it was razed to the ground by British bombing raids. Although the embassy moved to Bonn after the war, its reputation has hardly improved. Its location, in a Fifties Ministry of Works building, is in stark contrast to its Paris cousin. Bonn is famously one of the dullest capitals in Europe, without the élan and glamour of Paris or even the food of Brussels. In 1999, the German government and the British embassy will move back to Berlin. It remains to be seen whether this will bring the embassy to a level of prestige matching that of Paris.

## Where women are British ambassadors

Dublin  
The Holy See (Vatican City)  
Abidjan (Ivory Coast)

Minsk (Belarus)  
Tashkent (Uzbekistan)  
Beirut (Lebanon)  
Kigali (Rwanda)

"She's in a frightful baw," said a voice redolent of the Foreign Office. Such self-mocking use of old-fashioned public school patois suits this belittling of the highest-flying woman in the diplomatic service - Dame Pauline Neville-Jones.

Well, she is in a baw and she has every reason to be, according to her friends. Indeed, the angry fumes can be seen rising from her Chelsea house, where she has been sulking in her tent since December, quite understandably. For her head has just crashed against the glass ceiling and the sound of the collision is reverberating around the vaulted corridors and marbled stairwells of the Foreign Office.

She is speaking to no one. The news of her imminent departure from the second-highest post in the Foreign Office emerged from hostile leaking at the very top. Her friends are gleeful that it has rebounded sharply upon the head of Sir John Coles, the Permanent Under-Secretary, who, they say, has done her down. He does not like the public accusation of sexism at the top of the Foreign Office, and the Prime Minister is not pleased.

Pending the usual delicate negotiations over a severance deal, Dame Pauline will shortly leave the Foreign Office to join NatWest's investment banking department, specialising in Europe. Douglas Hurd, her old political boss, is already there, as a director and deputy chairman of NatWest Markets.

reached her post as political director, second only to the Permanent Under-Secretary, will be given a Grade 1 ambassadorial post - Paris, Bonn, Washington or Moscow. (One went to Rome, usually a Grade 2 post, but it was upgraded especially for him.) It is her failure to be given the Paris embassy, the plum posting, that has led to her leaving prematurely and in anger.

Dame Pauline was effectively winked out of her job as political director by Sir John despite having been promoted to it with

**She's suddenly a virago fit only for Bosnian battlefields, some kind of FO Annie Oakley**

the express enthusiasm of the Prime Minister. Indeed, John Major has stepped into this fray, provoking further resentment from the embarrassed Sir John. "The Prime Minister has been remarkably kind and supportive to her," says one insider. It explains why she was made a Dame in the New Year's Honours List.

But when it was plain she was about to walk out and seek greener pastures elsewhere, the top brass became afraid they would be blamed for treating her badly and the high-level leaking began. She was said to be "difficult", "acerbic", "a bit outspoken" and "not absolutely a top-drawer brain, jolly good but more of a 2.1". The snake whisperers are everywhere. To give a

flavour of how these things are done in the poisonous corridors of power, take this classic leakage to the *Times* last month: "Those who have known her for years say that the efficient, strong-willed manner in which she conducts her affairs was invaluable in dealing with the turbulent Bosnians. But it hasn't proved sufficiently emollient for the niceties of diplomatic life."

So, she's suddenly a virago fit only for Bosnian battlefields, some kind of Foreign Office Annie Oakley. The world of diplomacy grows ever greyer, with everything done these days by committee, but Dame Pauline was a character with a touch of old-style panache. She has a pithy turn of phrase, unlike her more mealy-mouthed colleagues. She was outstandingly good as head of Britain's delegation at Dayton, Ohio, where the accords creating a Bosnian peace treaty were forged. Her confidential telegrams were predicted to "make vintage reading in 30 years' time", reflecting the shifting tensions between the European factions under pressure from the impatient Americans. She has an open, if sometimes slightly brittle, air - but mixed with a warmth that makes her remembered.

Once ousted as political director, the Prime Minister's chief foreign adviser, she wanted the Paris embassy. "Quite understandable," says an ex-Foreign Office hand. "In these days when we all take a pretty dim view of the ambassadorial function, at least you want to do it in an amusing place." The famously lavish and expensive splendours of the Paris embassy make it the most coveted prize of all. Lizzy, Proust and Oscar Wilde dined there. It is usually reserved as the reward for one

exactly in her position, as a last post. She is 56, and friends think it should have been hers to take her through to compulsory retirement at 60.

But she is a woman, and single. The job went to a man six years her junior, Michael Jay, an expert in European affairs - as is she. "Brilliant but dedicated," says one insider of him. "He looks as if he's walked straight from the Planet Boffin." Another is reported to have said: "She would have made the French sit up and take notice," a friend says. "There is absolutely no doubt at all that if she had been a man, she would never have been passed over. It's unthinkable."

All this might seem like a rather petulant storm in a Whitehall glass of claret, since the leakers against her were quick to point out that she was offered the Bonn embassy. Surely Bonn is, if anything, more important diplomatically and economically than Paris? But they knew she didn't want it. She was deputy at Bonn until 1991 and didn't want to go over old ground. ("And, let's face it," says one ex-Foreign Office man, "the French are a great deal more congenial than the Germans.")

But more than that, the job wasn't available until late next year. That wouldn't have mattered if they had left her in post as political director. But Sir John, having effectively unseated her, then offered her what she regarded as crumbs in the mean time.

"They wanted her to fuff around with Cyprus, but she'd have gone mad with frustration." Insult turned to injury when they refused to raise her to Grade 1. Here, the Prime Minister stepped in, and insisted she should at least get the top

grade - but now instead she is going, in a huff.

She has reached a higher rank than any other woman ever and until now she has always said she never really found many serious obstacles in her career, little direct discrimination. But now she has fallen heavily at the last fence and most observers say it wouldn't have happened to a man.

Few men, apart from Catholic priests, ever have to dedicate themselves so single-mindedly to their career. The daughter of two doctors, after Leeds High

ent occupation, it makes the treatment she has received at the end of her career all the more shameful because she has made a far greater sacrifice than any of the men around her.

Only seven of 183 British embassies around the world have a woman ambassador. The number of women in the top three Foreign Office grades is falling: it was 3.4 per cent in 1990 but only 1 per cent in 1995. This compares badly with an already bad average across the Civil Service of 8.5 per cent.

Pauline Neville-Jones's story will do little to encourage others to follow in her footsteps. Her failure to win the Paris embassy appointment may look pre-trivial to outsiders, but within the curious portals of the increasingly anachronistic Foreign Office to which she has devoted her life, these things matter a great deal.

Now, admit it, already you are asking yourself, well, was she up to it? Is she a troublemaker? Is she too difficult? To women who complain about their treatment always end up sounding spoilt and tiresome, playing the gender card as an act of aggrieved revenge. The angrier they get, the more the wise old heads nod and say: "There you are! Emotional unreasonable!" But would the ever have made her political director, chief adviser to the Prime Minister, or chief British negotiator on Bosnia, signatory to the Dayton agreement, a head of running intelligence analysis from M16, M15 and GCHQ if she wasn't up to it? Ambassadors are increasingly empty vessels, so the Paris job is considerably less taxing than those other posts she has held. But the plum foreign posts are plainly still just jobs for the boys (and their wives).

**The Prime Minister stepped in and insisted Dame Pauline should at least get the top grade**

School, Pauline Neville-Jones won a scholarship to Oxford. But when she entered the Foreign Office in 1963 women were still limited to 10 per cent of the intake. They had to resign on marriage right up until 1972. It was only four years ago that the Diplomatic Service Wives' Association bothered to rename itself the Diplomatic Spouses Association, so rare were women, let alone women with husbands. After all, it is hard to find a portable husband willing to globe-trot perpetually, with little chance of independent employment. These days even men find it hard to procure such pliable wives.

So she always knew she had to choose between a lonely life of success, or a family and a differ-

quake  
reeze



Graphic: Mark Hayman



## Glossy game of I Spy

If Dame Stella Rimington, soon to retire as head of MI5, does not become the next Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge when Lord St John of Fawsley retires this summer, she can blame the society magazine *Harpers & Queen*.

Next month's edition of the glossy has infuriated the college



Dame Stella: delicate matter

by flagging an article on Oxbridge masterclasses - "Dame Stella Rimington is tipped to be next Master of Emmanuel - but is running an Oxbridge college the enviable job that it used to be?"

"That is both wrong and naughty," says the Master's secretary. "The election has not taken place yet. The governing body is still choosing candidates. The only reason for the suggestion is that it was reported that she came to a dinner at High Table last term."

Professor John Coates, who has been acting as vice-master and head of the selection procedure, confirms that this is the case. "It is a very delicate mat-

ter," he says. "As we think of people or look at those who have applied we weigh up how valuable their input will be in three fields: education, teaching and research." And counter-espionage, surely.

## Tory MP's teeny secret

Few MPs are as zealous as Peter Luff, the genial Tory who today introduces a Bill to get teenage girls' magazines certified like videos and restricted according to age. To win support within the Commons, he has, I hear, been carrying a few samples on his person. Woe betide any innocent bystander lurking in the lobbies and corridors. Before you can blink, Luff whisks out a copy of *More*, *Sugar*, *Bliss* or other lurid examples of the genre. The only problem that the MP for Worcester has encountered on his campaign trail has been back at home, with his 10-year-old daughter, Rosie, whose reading matter inspired his concern. "He is determined



Peter Luff: secret reading



Dame Shirley: mystery group of supporters

not to let Rosie see these publications," explains his wife. "So every time she comes anywhere near, he dives into the garage and locks them in the boot of the car, and re-emerges rather red-faced."

Poor Rosie. If that isn't enough to confuse her, what is?

## Prediction is a gamble

In a lecture to be given today at the Royal Geographical Society, Lord Rothschild, chairman of the National Heritage Memorial Fund, dispenser of National Lottery money to good causes, says that lottery turnover is running at £5bn a year, with good causes receiving £30m a week. How "wildly out", he notes, were the predictions of the Royal Commission on Gambling in 1979, which forecast a turnover of £100m a year and a £45m per annum contribution to good causes. How wildly out indeed was the Royal Commission on Gambling - chaired, as it recall, by the late Lord Rothschild, father of today's speaker.

## Baffled by propaganda

I must admit to being puzzled by a fax sent to me by the Westminster Supporters' Group. The document appears to be a piece of propaganda backing Dame Shirley Porter and her former Westminster Council cronies against the accusations of gerrymandering made by John Magill, the District Auditor. First, none of the current Tories on the council seems to know who the mysteriously anonymous "supporters" are - and there is not even a telephone number to respond to. There is an address - but in deepest Battersea, the wrong side of the river for a Westminster supporter.

Will the supporters reveal themselves?

## Shirley some mistake ...

In his review of the biography of the newspaper proprietor Conrad Black in the *Mail on*

*Sunday*, the journalist Peter McKay added a humorous postscript. He hopes, he says, that his opinion of Conrad Black is "unclouded by the remote possibility that they might one day be in an employer-employee situation".

That possibility must be even more remote now. McKay wrote that the most interesting part of the book concerned Black's first wife, Joanna, who later changed her name to Shirley. Mr Black, a stickler for accuracy, will certainly remember that his first wife was called Shirley, and later changed her name to Joanna.

## Wizard of the guitar

I felt honoured to be the only newspaper person at a private party thrown at a night club that was decidedly off-Broadway by The Who's Pete Townshend for the cast of his musical *Tommy*, which opens next month. All the leading players took it in turns to jump up on stage and sing a rock or soul standard.

Not everyone managed to raise the rafters, but I spotted a definite star in the making: Nicola Hughes, who plays the acid queen. Her rendition of "Big Spender" was a great performance that crossed Shirley Bassey with Tina Turner.

The evening ends with the 18-year-old Tommy, Paul Keating, singing "Pinball Wizard", accompanying him on acoustic guitar, and pointing manically, was a bald, middle-aged gentleman who I was told is a little hard of hearing.

I assume he is a gatecrasher and go to tell our host, only to discover ... Yes, it was Mr Townshend himself.

Eagle Eye

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## Making bad schools better

There will be a thinly veiled sense of panic in many homes this morning as parents digest what the Government's chief inspector has to say about the state of our primary and secondary schools. It will be matched by a mixture of depression, anxiety and probably resentment among teachers in some of the many schools identified as underperforming.

The inspector, Chris Woodhead, the chief executive of Ofsted, concluded that standards need to be raised in half of primary schools and 40 per cent of secondary schools. Sounds awful, but it isn't all bad. About 200 schools were highlighted for standards which were "good, improving or outstanding". Excellent schools are spread across the country. They are not by any means all selective. Schools in very similar environments achieve widely differing results. As Mr Woodhead pointed out: "The most successful secondary schools achieve GCSE results twice as good as others in similar socio-economic circumstances."

So English schools are not overwhelmingly bad and they are not doomed to disaster by their funding structure, the background of their pupils or their admissions procedure. The question is how those underperforming schools can be brought closer to the standards of the best.

We should start with the quality of teachers. Thousands of teachers are not delivering. But sacking the worst teachers is at best only a small part of the solution. Bad teachers are far outnumbered by the mass which is hardworking, dedicated and often talented. We will only recruit and retain teachers of high quality once the profession is just that, a high-status career, highly regarded by society

and rewarded in kind. We should demand high performance from teachers, but be ready to reward it when it is delivered.

Effective teaching is only possible within a well-managed school. Headteachers probably matter more than anyone else to improving the quality of a school. The best teacher in the world will not succeed in a demoralised and badly managed school. Headteachers should be given more special training to develop managerial and entrepreneurial skills.

However, a headteacher can only manage a school within an environment largely created by government and local authorities. There is a mounting case for shifting away from mixed ability teaching in all classes to more setting and streaming within comprehensive schools. Individual-oriented learning programmes should be balanced with whole class teaching and the traditional methods that still prevail on the Continent. And primary schools should not be distracted by too broad a national curriculum, with other social and moral tasks loaded on top. Every school should have the resources it needs to teach properly – that may mean that schools in problem areas with large numbers of difficult children will need extra funding.

The Secretary of State for Education, Gillian Shephard, responded to yesterday's report by promising to publish league tables for primary schools. This is not good enough. Tests, league tables and regular Ofsted reports are all useful: they monitor progress and help parents make choices. But they may prompt some improvements. But our real aim must be to create a professional, motivated and well-managed body of teachers employing the right teaching techniques.

## In defence of ugliness

In Britain we have only begun to recognise the allure of cosmetic surgery. In the United States, the likes of Marlene Dietrich, Bette Davis and their face-lifts are long dead. For Joan Crawford, plastic surgery was an essential: "Beauty may be only skin deep, but ugliness goes all the way to the bone."

It is not just women who are captivated by liposculpture, chemical peels, tummy tucks, collagen injections and silicon implants. Clark Gable's wives paid for his teeth to be rebuilt and eventually extracted *in toto* (they were so bad that Vivien Leigh hated kissing him in *Gone With the Wind*). Both Gable and Bing Crosby had their ears pinned back (glue did not work for Bing). The Kirk Douglas chin dimple is high on the menu of plastic surgeons in Beverly Hills and is just one feature of Michael Jackson's complex reconstruction as an android of uncertain origin.

Nineties Britain, in which the gym has become a new place of homage and the flat stomach the Holy Grail, should offer plenty of rich pickings for plastic surgeons. As Angus McGrouther, this country's first professor of plastic surgery, said in a speech last night, we should recognise how cosmetic surgery can transform a person's self-image.

We do not need to agree completely with the professor when he said: "Disfigurement is the last bastion of discrimination." Yet plastic surgery often does more than pander to vanity. It could dramatically improve the quality of life for many of the 2 million people

who suffer some form of disfigurement.

The health service has better things to spend its money on than creating a better-looking nation. But that does not mean cosmetic surgery has no place in state-funded health care. Children, for example, can be cruelly taunted over disfigurements that can leave them emotionally wounded for life: a sympathetic attitude should be taken in funding their treatment. The removal of an unsightly and ill-judged tattoo might dramatically improve someone's job prospects.

Nor should we be censorious about surgery that is privately paid for. A liberal society should allow adults to alter their bodies as they please, free from sneering. The real risk with plastic surgery is not that it allows choice but that it is the bearer of homogeneity: beautiful people, with anodyne good looks, perfect smiles, straight noses and a persona modelled on soap operas from Australia or the West Coast of the US. One of the forces that is driving people to the surgeon's knife is an intolerance of difference.

If this social conformism had triumphed through the ages, imagine what would have become of portrait painting. Instead of the full character of the human face, wars and all, straining with effort, conveyed by the great Russian portrait painters such as Repin, we would have had rows of smiling lookalikes with fake tans. We should defend the right to be different, embrace diversity and take pleasure in what conformists regard as ugly.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Personal involvement is what makes a good funeral

*From The Rev Dr Paul Sheppy*  
Sir: I was interested to read letters from clergy suggesting that in their parishes care for the bereaved in the provision of funerals displayed the kind of good practice for which the National Funerals College is arguing. Martin Leigh (2 February) proposes some market research, implying that the results would be more positive than criticism based on anecdotal hearsay.

In the course of preparing my doctoral thesis, I had occasion to read some of the academic research relating to funerary care and provision. It is readily available, and much of it has been published in either professional journals or popular books.

The evidence I read and which I gathered myself suggested that clergy were more sanguine about their performance than their parishioners. Barely a minister to whom I spoke could refrain from telling me that he, or she, did "a good funeral". Their confidence was based upon the thanks they received from mourners immediately after the service.

I regard much post-funeral thankfulness as relief that "it" was not as ghastly as it might have been.

Yours faithfully,  
PAUL P. J. SHEPPY  
Secretary, The Joint Liturgical Group of Great Britain  
Barnoldswick, Lancashire  
2 February

*From The Rev Struan H. Dunn*  
Sir: All this fuss about the conduct of funerals needs to be put in perspective.

I had to take a funeral for an ex-patriate in Spain and it took nearly a whole day to complete the task. When we arrived at the cemetery overlooking the port of Barcelona, the grave had not been dug. Any sense of dignified decorum was broken when the long line of mourners was pushed aside by four men pushing a wheelbarrow, making haste to reach the designated spot. Armed with pickaxes, swords and spades, they proceeded to excavate the old family grave. Earth, bones and debris went flying, while the chief mourner sat in

silent resignation on a nearby grave, the coffin meanwhile parked unceremoniously against a wall.

Some stiff-upper-lip protests to the *Jefe* (superintendent) were met with the response "Maitana" – come back tomorrow! A wise ex-patriate, however, passed 300 pesetas under the table and the commitment was re-scheduled for 2.30pm that same afternoon.

This gave everyone plenty of time to sample excellent Spanish cuisine in the city's nearby restaurants. We returned to the graveside, freshly dug, after the briefest of sestas and everything was brought to a satisfactory conclusion.

Yours faithfully,  
STRUAN H. DUNN  
Rural Dean of Gillingham  
Wigmore, Kent  
2 February

### Orphaned by technology

*From Ms Josephine Quintaville*  
Sir: We welcome Polly Toynbee's comments regarding unclaimed frozen embryos ("Who'll bear an unwanted foetus?", 2 February), as we are trying to encourage debate at all levels. While the tone of her article was certainly agitated, perhaps a little more emotional focus on the fact that these embryos have been abandoned by their parents might have been expected. To quote Oscar Wilde: "To lose both [parents] looks like carelessness".

It is this carelessness that Core (Comment on Reproductive Ethics) would like to address. There are very serious scientific, legal and moral questions that need to be asked about embryo freezing. Technology rushes ahead but the thinking has yet to be done. All we are asking for at this stage is to hold an extended and open debate with access to as much research and opinion as possible.

The "orphaning" to date of 3,000 frozen embryos is fruit of the present system. We should not rush into any further mistakes.

Yours sincerely,  
JOSEPHINE QUINTAVILLE  
Co-Founder  
Comment on Reproductive Ethics  
London, SW3  
2 February

### A fearless mouse

*From Mrs Geraldine Burke*  
Sir: Whatever gave Marianne Macdonald the impression that Jane Eyre was a "mousy governess" ("Brontës next to scale heights of television", 5 February)? In the words of Q. D. Leavis, she was "fearless, unashamed of passionate feeling, and while needing to serve, still determined to have her rights acknowledged". Hardly the characteristics of a mousy woman.

Yours sincerely,  
GERALDINE BURKE  
Marsh Baldon,  
Oxfordshire  
5 February

### Nobel youngsters

*From Mr Liam Dunne*  
Sir: Geoffrey Brogan (letter, 3 February) is incorrect. The youngest person ever to be awarded

the Nobel Prize for Literature was Rudyard Kipling. He received it in 1907, aged 42.

Yours sincerely,  
LIAM DUNNE  
London, SW18

*From The Rev Dr A. E. Harvey*  
Sir: In your leading article "Why graduates should pay more" (2 February), you agree with what appears to be the view of both Government and Opposition that higher education must henceforth be financed with the help of some form of student loans or graduate tax. This is allegedly made necessary by the greatly increased number of those wishing to continue their education after they leave school and is justified on the grounds that since a degree or diploma is likely to lead to a better-paid job, it is only fair that the beneficiary should pay back some of the cost of acquiring this advantage.

The next generation will have to carry burdens greater than any before them: unsolved environmental and geopolitical problems created by our profligate use of the earth's resources and provision for an unprecedentedly large population of the elderly. In addition to all this, we are now asking them to pay back the cost of higher education.

### Healthy salaries at the NHS

*From Ms June Poston and Mr Graeme Poston*  
Sir: Roy Lilley (Another View: "Nursing the sick – and grudges", 2 February), invites many questions and much argument. The most fundamental question has to be, if, as Mr Lilley reports, the hospital boss's salary is a mere £65,000 in the NHS and his or her salary would be more like £120,000 in the private sector, why, then, is he or she not working in the private sector?

Yours faithfully,  
JUNE POSTON  
Clinical Nurse  
GRAEME POSTON  
Consultant Surgical Oncologist  
Liverpool  
3 February

### Yorkshire brass

*From Mr John Tindale*  
Sir: Simon Calder (Weekend: "Captain Cook: from Whitty to Hawaii", 3 February) repeats the fallacy that Captain Cook "former house" was "dismantled stone by stone" and taken to Melbourne in Australia. Even in 1934 there were those who would sell you Buckingham Palace – this cottage was the home of Cook's father, who built it himself after Cook had long left home. Cook might have visited it, but that's about all. The Melbourne authorities fell for a good Yorkshire bit of salesmanship.

Yours truly,  
JOHN TINDALE  
Whitty,  
North Yorkshire  
25 January

### Taxing our children

*From The Rev Dr A. E. Harvey*  
Sir: In your leading article "Why graduates should pay more" (2 February), you agree with what appears to be the view of both Government and Opposition that higher education must henceforth be financed with the help of some form of student loans or graduate tax. This is allegedly made necessary by the greatly increased number of those wishing to continue their education after they leave school and is justified on the grounds that since a degree or diploma is likely to lead to a better-paid job, it is only fair that the beneficiary should pay back some of the cost of acquiring this advantage.

The next generation will have to carry burdens greater than any before them: unsolved environmental and geopolitical problems created by our profligate use of the earth's resources and provision for an unprecedentedly large population of the elderly. In addition to all this, we are now asking them to pay back the cost of higher education.

In the past, it has been taken for granted that parents should do their best to provide for their children a life at least as good as they have had themselves. Now, for perhaps the first time in recorded history, this covenant has been broken. We have consented to place our own comfort (represented by a low level of taxation) above the needs of our children. If parents were to offer their children the best available education only on condition of being repaid later on, we would hardly approve. Is not the whole concept of student loans to save the taxpayer money equally immoral?

Yours faithfully,  
ANTHONY HARVEY  
Sub-Dean  
Westminster Abbey  
London, SW1  
3 February

### Market for MPs

*From Lord Broadbridge*  
Sir: We in the Lords have been viewing with some amusement the future over MPs' salary levels. What is only infrequently mentioned is that their allowances in many cases treble or more their nominal salary.

Is it said that an MP recently advertised for a secretary. Facing his preferred candidate he asked, "And what salary would you be wanting?"

"Fifty pounds per week," she replied.

"Oh, I'll pay you that with pleasure."

"Oh, no," she said. "It'll be £200 per week with pleasure."

Yours faithfully,  
BROADBRIDGE  
House of Lords  
London, SW1  
27 February

*From Mr Simon Herbertson*  
Sir: Henceforth, at every general election, on the ballot paper beside the candidates' name and political party, put the annual salary each individual prospective MP is prepared to work for in Parliament, up to a maximum of, say, £50,000, the bill to be paid out of the local council tax.

We're all supposed to scabble around in an undignified manner undercutting each other for work – why can't they join in the fun, too?

Yours faithfully,  
SIMON HERBERTSON  
Minstead,  
Hampshire  
4 February

## Guaranteed to be a total fraud

There is a case going on in the High Court at the moment that will be of interest to anyone who has ever tried to get their money back and failed. Charles Goodbred, the man who has pioneered the modern guarantee in Britain, is up on a charge of conspiring to defraud a customer of rightful compensation. Here is part of yesterday's proceedings, when Goodbred took the stand to explain exactly how guarantees work.

**Counsel:** Your name is Charles Goodbred?

**Goodbred:** That is the name under which I was registered.

**Counsel:** By your parents?

**Goodbred:** By two people who claimed to be my parents.

**Counsel:** But they were your parents, were they not?

**Goodbred:** Nobody else ever came forward to claim me.

**Judge:** Excuse me for interjecting. Mr Goodbred, but is this not an over-cautious attitude to your parentage? Should we not take it on trust that the two people who tell us they are our father and mother probably are our father and mother?

**Goodbred:** My work has taught me not to take anyone on trust, my lord, least of all myself.

**Judge:** I see. Carry on.

**Counsel:** Now, Mr Goodbred, you



MILES KINGSTON

are, I believe, the originator of the so-called "lifetime guarantee".

**Goodbred:** That is so.

**Counsel:** Could you explain to the court how this works?

**Goodbred:** Certainly. What we do for certain classes of object, such as videotapes, is give them a lifetime guarantee. When the object wears out, as it is bound to, the purchaser feels aggrieved and wants his money back.

**Counsel:** Do you then recompense him?

**Goodbred:** No. We point out that the video has worn out because it has come to the end of its lifetime. A lifetime guarantee is only valid until the end of the lifetime. After that, it is worthless. "Lifetime" does not mean "eternity". Almost the opposite, in fact.

**Counsel:** So the guarantee is only valid while the videotape still works?

**Goodbred:** Yes.

**Counsel:** And as soon as it expires, the guarantee expires also?

**Goodbred:** Yes.

**Counsel:** Surely the guarantee is therefore worthless?

**Goodbred:** Not to those who issue it.

**Judge:** So how do you know that I am the judge, Mr Goodbred?

**Goodbred:** I am sorry, my lord?

**Judge:** You said earlier that you took nobody on trust, even your parents. How do you know I am the judge?

**Goodbred:** I don't. I only have your word for it. I am working on the assumption that nobody voluntarily would want to wear those ridiculous clothes, do that ridiculous job and talk in that ridiculous kind of language.

**Judge:** To which kind of language do you refer, pray?

**Goodbred:** It's the kind of language in which people say: "To which kind of language do you refer, pray?"

**Judge:** Fair enough. Carry on.

**Counsel:** Could you give us an idea of some of the other guarantees you have invented?

**Goodbred:** Certainly. I devised the "Cleaned While You Wait" guarantee. People assumed that this meant things would be cleaned quickly. Not at all. People can wait for

hours, days, even weeks. I devised the "Same day cleaning" guarantee ...

**Counsel:** But surely that cannot be used deceptively! That means what it says – that goods will be cleaned the same day they are handed in?

**Goodbred:** Not at all. It can mean that they are cleaned the same day that they are returned. Very often we actually give a "Same day cleaning" guarantee, and people misread it as "Same day cleaning".

**Counsel:** Any other examples of this iniquitous approach to language?

**Goodbred:** Certainly. I was the first to issue a "24-hour service" promise. People always thought that meant 24 hours from when the service was requested or when the goods were handed in. Not so. I was also the first to point out that "Round the clock service" was not the same as being always open.

**Counsel:** But surely being open round the clock means being open all the time?

**Goodbred:** I think not. How many hours are there on the clock?

**Counsel:** Twelve.

**Goodbred:** So round-the-clock service guarantees being open a maximum of 12 hours, not 24.

**Judge:** I think he's got you there, Jim!

*The case continues.*

مكتبة من الأدب



# business

## Victims of electricity fever must now pay price



COMMENT

One consequence already being felt is deeper cost-cutting programmes than anyone had previously thought desirable as the buyers desperately try to make their investments produce a respectable return.

There will no doubt be more electricity bids to keep the City in bid fees before the season is out. But already there is a suspicion that some of those to have struck when electricity was the height of fashion might have overpaid. Certainly some very full prices were coughed up in the scramble for regional electricity companies and if regret is not quite the word for it yet, there are some worried looking purchasers wandering around this industry right now.

One of the consequences, already being felt at the coal face, is much deeper cost-cutting programmes than anyone had previously thought desirable or even possible as the buyers desperately try to make their investments produce a respectable return. In some companies, up to 20 per cent of the workforce is to be shed over the next year and there could be further cuts the year after.

For the time being, the 12 regional electricity companies operate in a comparatively benevolent regulatory environment. This cannot and will not persist if previous privatisations are anything to go by. The available pay back time may be more limited than any of the bidders appreciated in the heat of the scrum. That has added extra urgency to the cost cutting, which in turn shows growing signs of running into serious union resistance.

Add to that the fact that the industry will soon be going through a period of very substantial structural change, with the onset of

competition and vertical integration, and the concern seems wholly justified.

### Bizarre battle over Chile Growth Fund

The GT Chile Growth Fund sounds more like something out of a Tex Mex restaurant than the normally sedate world occupied by investment trusts. But investment trust it is. It is also the territory on which a bizarre little City takeover battle is being fought. The bid is unusual because it is taking place outside Takeover Panel controls, or any other regulatory authority for that matter. This in turn is because the company, though listed on the London stock exchange and managed out of London, is registered in the Cayman Islands.

For the past year or more the GT Chile Growth Fund has been under siege by a group of arbitrageurs called Regent Kingpin Acquisitions, an outfit that specialises in trying to narrow the gap between assets and share price in funds such as GT Chile Growth. Unbelievably, RKA beats the Chile Growth Fund for the number of domiciles it answers to (or more truthfully, doesn't answer to). Managed out of London, it is also registered in the Cayman Islands and is ultimately controlled, via Hong Kong, by a Canadian holding company.

According to GT Chile's financial advisers, the arts have ignored getting on for every

rule in the book in their quest for control of the fund's \$385m of assets. Included in the list of alleged misdemeanours is misleading shareholders, not obeying the usual takeover timetable rules, and perhaps worst of all, offering favourable terms to some shareholders over others.

Regent denies it all, of course, but whether by fair means or foul, the arts were last night claiming control over 62 per cent of GT Chile's shares and demanding the keys to the city. Not likely, says GT Management, which runs the fund. Even if they have 60 per cent, which GT Chile disputes, they have got there by disreputable means.

But while there are important issues of principle involved here, it is hard to feel too sorry for GT Chile or its shareholders. There is only one reason why companies set up shop in the Cayman Islands and only one reason investors are attracted to them: inadequate investor protection is part of the price paid for the assumed tax advantages. Furthermore, it is not at all clear that the arts are indeed the force for evil they are painted. Since they arrived on the scene the discount has narrowed from 20 to 7 per cent. You won't find many shareholders complaining about that.

reminder of this old truism over the weekend when he prompted a storm of protest by remarking that late payment of bills was the mark of a good businessman.

It may not be to everyone's liking, but it is a fact that very small businesses struggling to survive are likely to juggle their debts and avoid paying creditors as long as possible. This must have been especially true in the property, hotel and publishing jungles where Mr Heseltine cut his teeth in the 'fifties.

There are a number of other celebrated modern businessmen, such as Richard Branson, whose biographies demonstrate the pressure to cut corners to stay afloat in their early days. The truth of the matter is that most businesses attempt, with varying degrees of success, to use their suppliers as a source of free loans. When they go bust there is a chain reaction of defaults. Small firm owner managers are also notorious for running slapdash and ineffective credit control systems, often without clear payment terms.

According to DTI figures, 40 per cent of small firms have no standard conditions of trade, so even their creditors are likely to be unclear about when the cheques are due and what happens if they are not paid. If the practice of late payment was confined to small firms, there might be more tolerance of it, but large companies are often the worst offenders, able to extort very substantial free loans from their smaller sup-

pliers by the simple expedient of failing to send cheques on time. Worse still, it has become clear over the last few years that government departments are as bad as anyone. Improvement is proceeding at no more than a snail's pace.

Mr Heseltine cannot be criticised for injecting a dose of reality into the debate, but the government may find that legislation is both popular and less impractical than ministers and the CBI now claim.

### Arthur Daley approach to privatisation

In the circumstances, it was all going remarkably smoothly. And then suddenly, disaster. The political triumph of the sale of the first three rail franchises has been reduced to ashes by the weekend's fraud allegations.

The trouble is that Sir George Young has been forced by election pressures to behave like Arthur Daley, logging off everything in his lock-up under the railway arches at rock bottom prices, because he knows the police are on the way, in the form of a Labour government.

More haste, less speed. Roger Salmon, the franchise director, has been told to have the other 22 train operating companies ready for sale by October. The bandwagon is now moving so fast it will be hard to keep it on the rails.

## ML Laboratories directors net £6m in options bonanza

ENUS GRIMOND

Directors in ML Laboratories, the fledgling pharmaceutical company, have made a gain on the sale of options less than two weeks after in Leech, chairman and co-founder, cashed in shares worth £1.8m in the company's first public offering.

ML's shares have been given an additional spur by the revelation that a clinical study of a new AIDS treatment conducted on four patients with late stages of the disease was progressing well.

From a price of 35p in November, the shares soared to a peak of 47p after January's news, although they slid 18p to

43p yesterday, apparently on disappointment that the group had yet to tie up a marketing deal for its anti-asthma inhaler.

At a briefing for City analysts yesterday, the company defended both the decision to cash in options and the AIDS study. Mr Sim pointed to the 46-fold increase in the company's share price since it originally floated on the third market in 1987. "Let's not ask why it happens, let's just accept that it has happened. There are a lot of private shareholders and institutions who will be very pleased with that."

Professor Davies admitted that the AIDS study, after which one of the patients died, was "far too small to discuss any efficacy of the treatment." But he said the treatment had been "well tolerated" in the patients, two of

whom remain well seven months later. So-called "viral load" tests in the laboratory, involving the measurement of the amount of the virus remaining in the blood, compared well with AZT, the main anti-AIDS drug manufactured by Glaxo Wellcome.

The ML treatment involves dissolving dextrin sulphate in the company's patented ionic solution, developed as a method of kidney dialysis. Professor Davies said they had enough evidence to go forward to the next stage, a study involving 20 to 30 late-stage patients.

There was good news yesterday for Bepak, the aerosol manufacturer that has had to



Follow my leader: Kevin Leech, founder of ML Laboratories, who recently cashed in shares worth £55m

## Mercury furious at BT ruling

PETER RODGERS  
Business Editor

Mercury Communications yesterday said it was appalled by a ruling by Don Cruickshank, the telecoms regulator, that would make competitors pay for part of the cost of BT's redundancy schemes.

Mercury was commenting on Mr Cruickshank's announcement of the amount other operators will have to pay BT as interconnection charges to use its network.

A Mercury spokesman said the company had been assured two months ago that other operators would not be required to contribute to BT's redundancy costs. "We don't know what changed his mind," said the company.

Peter Howell-Davies, chief executive of Mercury, said BT would also be allowed under the new ruling to claw back money it has spent maintaining empty accommodation and on running the office of the chairman, Sir Iain Vallance.

Mr Howell-Davies said: "I am appalled that OfTel [the regulator] should feel BT deserves special treatment as competition is a fact of life for all operators. Many have used redundancy to improve their efficiency and reduce costs in the face of that competition."

The costs of those cuts were normally borne by a company and its shareholders and not by customers and competitors, he added. Mr Howell-Davies complained that BT's employee relations director had said in 1992 that the cost of the company's "Release" redundancy plan had been pitched higher than necessary, to persuade more people to leave BT.

## Sharp rise in costs prompts downgrading of BA profits

SSSELL HOTTEN

Analysis downgraded British Airways' full-year profits after it reported rising costs and disappointing passenger figures for the third quarter.

BA, linked in this weekend's financial press as a possible in-tor in Alitalia, made profits of £10m in the three months to 1 December. Although this

was up from the £80m a year earlier, the figure was still at the lower range of expectations.

The City had been worried about BA's costs, up 4.5 per cent half-way, and were looking for signs of a reduction. Instead, costs accelerated 9.2 per cent in the three months.

In Italy, speculation was mounting that BA may take a stake in Alitalia, the loss-making state airline that is being restructured.

Newspapers reported Silvio Berlusconi, general secretary of the Fiat-Cisl, an aviation union, as saying: "The negotiations [by Alitalia] with British Airways and other private Italian airlines exist and continue. We have an obligation [to our members] to make them known." BA declined to comment.

BA passenger revenues were disappointing, with only a 5 per cent rise on the previous year. Andrew Chambers, of Strauss Turnbull, said the revenues were "not as good as recent months". Credit Lyonnais Laing cut its full-year profit forecast by about £15m to £565m, while Strauss Turnbull trimmed £10m off its figure to £580m. BA shares fell 19p to 302p.

A BA spokesman said the higher costs were because the company had invested heavily, including upgrading facilities with the new flying beds and cradle seats for premium customers.

Passenger revenues were affected by bad weather which caused flight cancellations, and the impact of the US government's shut-down. BA also said French nuclear testing in the

Pacific had hit traffic from Japan to Europe.

Robert Ayling, chief executive, said the airline, which had cut £900m off its cost base in the past five years, would continue to attack costs. "We will be tackling costs vigorously. I do not believe any airline our size can sustain business with the sort of cost bases they currently have over the very long term."

A total of 24.8 million passengers flew on BA's scheduled services in the nine months to December, up 5 per cent on a year ago. In the third quarter to December, 7.5 million passengers were carried, up 3.9 per cent. With average passengers flying further, growth in revenue passenger kilometres was up 8.7 per cent in the third quarter and 9.6 per cent in the nine months.

## Edwards asks National Power for £5m support

VID HELLIER

Future of Coal Investments, mining group headed by the mer British Coal director Iain Edwards, was looking increasingly uncertain last night. With interest from traditional City backers thin on the ground for a £20m rights issue, Edwards has been forced to reach National Power, the creator and Coal's largest customer. He is believed to have asked National Power whether it could consider injecting up to £5m into the company as part of a rescue plan.

Sources close to Coal Investments described this approach last night as "very nearly a throw of the dice."

National Power was not saying yesterday what its response to Mr Edwards would be. "We've been approached by Coal Investments and we are listening to what they have to say," a spokesman said yesterday.

Analysts doubt whether National Power will be seduced by taking a significant investment in the embattled mining company, even though they are out that it would be in the strategic interest for Mr Edwards' company to survive. Coal Investments provides competition in the supply of coal against hard Budget's RJB Mining group.

Bankers and potential investors are disappointed that, af-

ter weeks of trying, Coal Investments has still not appointed a new chief executive to work alongside Mr Edwards. The company plans to appoint a chief executive and keep Mr Edwards on, perhaps in a strong marketing role.

Potential investors are believed to have been telling the company for some weeks that they will not entertain backing a rights issue if Mr Edwards retains his current position at the helm of the group without the support of a new chief executive.

In particular they are alarmed by the series of disappointing financial statements the company has been forced into making in the past few months. And the company is yet to produce its interim figures for the half-year to 30 September.

The company's debts are reportedly increasing daily and are said to be approaching the £30m level.

The banks, which are led by National Westminster, UBS and Banque Indosuez, have also indicated that they will not significantly increase the company's banking facility unless investors back a rights issue and the company recruits a new chief executive.

The banks were in a key meeting yesterday afternoon. Coal Investments was founded when Mr Edwards bought a number of redundant mines from British Coal.

## Economy: Prospects of fresh rate cut tomorrow recede as outlook brightens Markets fall on growth hopes

DIANE COYLE  
Economics Correspondent

Concerns that the economic outlook might not be as gloomy as feared hit interest rate hopes and sent financial markets lower yesterday. Gilts and shares in London ended lower, following the lead set by the US and Germany.

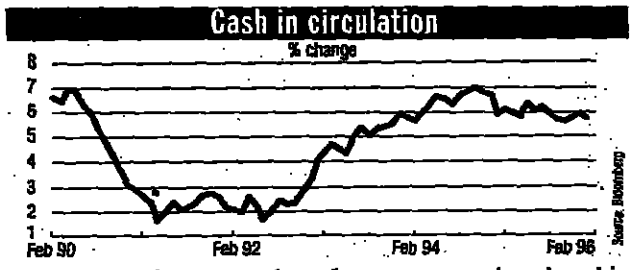
Remarks by Howard Davies, Deputy Governor of the Bank of England, that growth as high as 3 per cent this year was "well within the realms of possibility" followed figures showing the narrow money supply was slightly more buoyant than expected last month.

City analysts do not expect the Chancellor to reduce base rates after his meeting with the Governor of the Bank of England tomorrow after two moves in the past two months, but are still betting on one more quarter point reduction from the current level of 6.25 per cent before midsummer.

Gilts ended more than a point lower in heavy trading, while the FT-SE 100 index closed down nearly 35 points at 3746.6.

A weak performance by German government bonds yesterday also affected gilts. The bund market fell after figures showing an increase in German output for the second month running in December.

US Treasuries echoed the weakness in European markets, overshadowed by the prospect of record sales of Treasury bonds due this week. The Treasury is scheduled to auction



\$44.5bn-worth between today and Friday. The dollar fell below Yen 105 due to uncertainty about Japanese buyers' interest in the auction. It was down more than a penny at DM1.4625.

Cash in circulation in the UK rose more than expected in January, even though a big drop in banks' balances held at the Bank of England meant the overall growth of the narrow money measure, M0, dipped.

Narrow money fell 0.2 per cent during the month due to this £128m decline in bankers' balances, following a 0.9 per cent jump in December. M0's annual growth fell to 5.3 per cent from 5.7 per cent.

There was a 0.3 per cent rise in notes and coin in circulation last month, taking its year-on-year growth to 5.7 per cent - similar to its rate of growth in the previous six months.

The Bank of England warned that adjustment for seasonal variation was difficult over Christmas and New Year. Robert Barrie, UK economist at BZW, said: "Taking the two months together, the figures point to steady growth."

An article on interpreting the money supply due in the Bank of England's *Quarterly Bulletin* next week is expected to show that narrow money is a good forward indicator of the economy's performance.

Separate figures from department store and supermarket group John Lewis provided additional evidence that retail sales were not unduly weak last month. It reported that sales were running about 10 per cent higher than a year earlier.

However, new housing starts remained weak in December, and were 15 per cent lower in 1995 than the previous year.

Germany's industrial output rose 0.6 per cent in December, following a 0.9 per cent rise the previous month, a better performance than expected. Economist Robert Prior-Wandessforde at James Capel said: "There is some tentative hope that the worst of the slowdown in Germany may be behind us."

### Reports of a split are 'healthy part of analysis'

It is no surprise that the Chancellor and Governor of the Bank of England sometimes disagree at their monthly monetary meetings, a Bank of England director said yesterday, writes Diane Coyle.

Referring to recent reports of a split between the two men at their meeting last month, Ian Plenderleith, an executive director of the Bank, said that although these differences of view were written up in "extreme confrontational terms" they were a healthy part of the analysis and judgement.

"There is an urge to identify who 'won' and who 'lost' and an intense interest in keeping a sort of scorecard of the effect

## IN BRIEF

### Talks may yet save ailing Fokker

Fokker's chances of survival improved last night after several companies, including British Aerospace and Bombardier, said they were talking to the ailing Dutch aircraft maker, writes Russell Hotten. Bombardier, the Canadian company that owns Shorts Brothers in Belfast, said it was "just exploring" the situation with Fokker. BA's interest is via the AIR regional jet partnership it formed with France's Aerospatiale and Italy's Alenia.

AIR has always said it wanted to broaden the alliance, though a BA spokesman said its contact with Fokker could not really be described as negotiations. "We are just keep up with the situation," he said. "It has been done through AIR. It is entirely exploratory." South Korea's Samsung also said it was talking to Fokker, and the Taiwanese government is believed to be interested in all or part of the company.

### Clerical Medical 'reviewing options'

Clerical Medical, the 11th-largest life company in the UK, said yesterday it was reviewing its strategic options, but refused to comment on reports that it has put itself up for sale. Schroders, the merchant bank appointed by Clerical to contact potential buyers, also refused to comment on the reports. Analysts put a price of about £1bn on the mutual life insurer, which has £13bn of funds under management.

### Scottish Widows to axe 700

Scottish Widows, the insurance giant, is cutting 700 jobs. The cuts are expected to take effect over the next year as part of a radical streamlining and centralisation operation. Between 500 and 600 jobs will go at the firm's head office in Edinburgh, where it employs 2,200. The company said it hoped to achieve these reductions by retirement, routine departures and a scheme for voluntary redundancy.

### New boss lifts Hilton shares in US

Hilton Hotels Corporation's shares jumped more than 10 per cent to \$81.50 in early dealings on Wall Street as investors reacted favourably to the company's move to hire financial wizard Stephen Bollenbach as its president and chief executive officer from Walt Disney. Mr Bollenbach only joined Disney last April and was the architect of the company's merger with Capital Cities/ABC Inc. He replaces Barron Hilton as chief executive of Hilton.

### Oriel Group confirms approach

Oriel Group, insurance brokers, has received an approach from a third party which may or may not lead to an offer being made for the whole of the company, it said yesterday. The board said the talks were "exploratory and tentative".



## THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

Edited by TOM STEVENSON

## Downsized pooches dog Dalgety

When Dalgety paid £440m for the European petfood business of Quaker Petfoods a year ago, the hope was that the deal would help transform the business from a dull dog of a company into a more lively animal.

Few quibbled with the strategy. The idea was to move from being a bit-part player in the cut-throat food sector to a powerful force in one market - petfood, with two other businesses in agribusiness and food ingredients.

The Golden Wonder snacks and Homepride sauces were sold for £280m to help raise funds for the deal with the remainder coming from a rights issue.

If there were doubts about the logic they centred on the price Dalgety paid. At this level, it needed everything to go right to achieve the kind of returns it was promising. Yesterday's results showed that the plan has gone badly awry.

The 14 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £69.4m for the six months to December flatters the company as it includes a net £22m from the various disposals and acquisitions.

At the operating level profits were down from £61m to £47m with the worst problems centred in petfood where trading profits fell by £5m. This was partly due to a fall in sales at the end of the year though the excuses for the decline were fairly colourful. According to Dalgety chief executive Richard Clothier, Britain's pet owners have been downsizing their dogs, preferring to buy smaller pooches which eat less. On the cat front, Britain's fussy moggies have shifted their favours towards cans with chunky meat bits while Dalgety was moving towards pâté style offerings. What he did not say was that Dalgety had replaced meat chunks with vegetable substitutes in its Arthur's brand to save costs but seen the move backfire.

The company is pushing ahead with the rationalisation and it will achieve its £40m of cost savings by next year instead of 1998 as originally forecast.

Profits at agribusiness were up by 25 per cent to £21m though this was largely due to the acquisition of the Pig Improvement Company. Margins have been badly affected by rising raw material costs, particularly in wheat and soya.

In food ingredients, profits were down 17 per cent to £15m with rising raw material costs again a key factor.

Dalgety shareholders have watched the shares drift down from 484p in August to 413p, a further 2p easier yesterday. The outlook does not look encouraging. BZW has cut its forecast

from £132m to £122m for the full year which puts the shares on a forward rating of 15. With a recovery still dependent on everything going Dalgety's way,

## Property goes derivative

The latest attempt by a group of investing institutions to create a viable property derivatives market as an alternative to investing directly in property underlines the air of crisis surrounding the industry. Last year's 15 per cent underperformance of the market by property shares followed a 14 per cent lag in 1994 and it is impossible to find a sector analyst who sees an end to the slump.

It is becoming a familiar story, but property companies once again had to struggle with flat rental values and rising yields. The combination of those meant property values slipped 5 per cent during the year.

The industry's problems are legion, but one of the newer and most worrying concerns is the very status of property as an institutional investment.

The asset class sank to only 5 per cent of pension fund assets by the end of the year, compared with 14.5 per cent in 1981. At that time insurance companies had been even more heavily skewed towards property, with 21 per cent of their assets in bricks and mortar.

The worries about the speed with which institutions can buy and sell property when pension funds are being encouraged to invest in ever more liquid assets is one of the driving forces behind attempts to develop a securitised version of the sector. Whether it can succeed after many previously stalled attempts remains to be seen.

With a drip-feed of disinvestment from the sector, attention focuses on the prospects for rental growth and the movement in the yields surveys used to calculate capital values. This is a mixed bag, with falling bond yields around the world making current property yields look generous, but rents are still under the cosh from slow-growing employment and the number of properties offering no growth because they are currently being rented at levels higher than the going rate.

Flat rents cause two problems for property companies. They put the lid on asset values, which is one of the key de-

terminants of share price - depending on the mood of the market, property shares trade at either a premium or discount to this benchmark. But perhaps more importantly they restrict the flow of revenue from which a company can pay dividends.

To create a healthier cash flow companies are forced to rely less on contractually guaranteed rents and more on trading profits. In these difficult circumstances, selectivity is the key. The only property companies to outperform this year will be niche players such as Trocadero and Capital Shopping Centres and good asset sweaters like Asda, Burford and Chelsfield. Forget the majors which, with the possible exception of British Land, really only track the market as a whole.

## Ferguson feels the squeeze

Ferguson International is yet another name to add to the victims of the high street downturn. The labels group warned of a disappointing start to the second half when it announced the sale of its cost-hangers business in October. Yesterday it was forced to admit that trading had been even worse than expected.

Normalised profits will dip from last year's £12.8m to £11.5m in the 12 months to February, the company forecast, before a net £1.5m exceptional charge, mostly relating to the hanger division's withdrawal from German production.

Ferguson has been squeezed between the reluctance of consumers to spend on the garments and food for which it provides labels and hangers, and the soaring cost of raw materials. The worst pain has been on the garment side, as margin pressure from retailers like Marks & Spencer feeds down the production chain. There have been similar problems in food, where the big supermarkets are bearing down on suppliers. That has prevented Ferguson passing on cost increases of between 6 and 50 per cent over the past year.

The group has taken out 80 jobs since October and further cost-cutting measures are in the pipeline. In a carbon copy of the strategy of rival Jarvis Porter, it plans to move into more profitable areas like toiletries, while strengthening the existing US computer-labeling business.

If Ferguson realises net asset value of £20m on the disposal of the hangers operation, gearing should tumble to around 20 per cent. The shares, down 21p to 196p, stand on a forward multiple of 10. Jarvis Porter looks more exciting.

## John Willcock CITY DIARY

## A bridge too far for Allied Domecq's shareholder

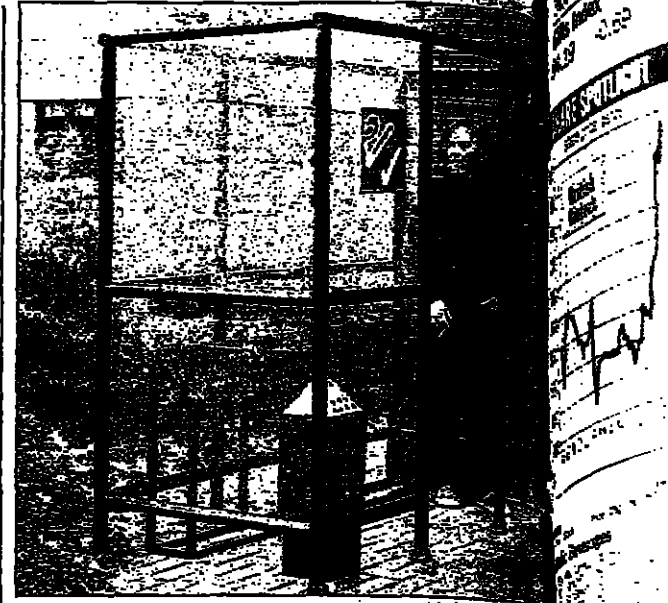
Allied Domecq shareholders who attend today's annual meeting may care to ask the board about one asset which seems anything but liquid and somewhat unproductive. It is a little known fact that the drinks giant owns the Shepton Mallet railway viaduct in Somerset, an imposing Victorian structure that fell victim to the Beeching cuts of the early 1960s.

The viaduct backs on to the garden behind the old head office of Hiram Walker, formerly the spirits division of Allied Domecq. The garden and the head office itself have long since been sold off, but the group could never find a buyer for the viaduct, a listed structure.

The viaduct is currently undergoing repairs to stop it falling down. English Heritage is contributing 40 per cent of the estimated £250,000 bill, and Allied Domecq the rest. No doubt shareholders will be congratulating the board on this public spirited gesture.

Officials within British Rail knew last Tuesday of the alleged ticket frauds on the London to Southend line, yet the Transport Secretary, Sir George Young, was only told of the problem on Thursday afternoon. The fact that the story broke so late ruined the privatisation handover, and according to sources Sir George is "hopping mad".

A spokesman for BR said yesterday: "Exactly how long this has been under investigation is unclear." He said it appeared that on Wednesday the Rail Settlement Plan, which administers the division of fare receipts, passed on the allegations to the Association of Train Operating Companies. On Thursday the association passed on the news to the group managing director of the British Rail Board (South and East), John Nelson. Mr Nelson duly notified



Are you one of those sad, pathetic nicotine addicts who couldn't keep that new year resolution to kick the habit? Have you been ejected from your office by a smoke ban, and do you huddle with fellow addicts around the puffing away come rain or shine? Relax. Introducing the weather shelter for smokers made of aluminium tubing, clear acrylic screens, which can be erected outside any block to keep workers dry while they puff. And it's Robin Yes, the Smoke Screen from the No Butts Bin Company, Poole, Dorset, starts at a mere £800 a go, compared with around £5,000 for the average bus shelter. A product to the imagination.

the Department of Transport, and hence Sir George Young. Perhaps the news was delayed by leaves on the track.

Last week the Diary drew the attention of investment bankers to Eddie George's imminent skiing holiday, and the spooky fact that almost exactly a year ago the Bank of England Governor's last ski trip was cut short by the collapse of Barings.

This prompted a Bank watcher yesterday to recount a similar incident concerning his predecessor, Sir Robin Leigh-Pemberton, now Lord Kingsdown. In October 1987 he had just reached the airport before flying off to a business jaunt around China when he got news of a huge stock market

sell-off. This turned Monday, but too late for Robin, who flew off in the regardless.

As the days passed and mood of panic heightened, Robin could not be seen as he travelled deeper into China. When the real get through he was told would take at least a week to get out of such a remote and back to the UK.

Step forward the "Biscuit", the private jet by Sir Hector Laming, the chairman of United Biscuits and a member of the C of the Bank of England. The Biscuit, which duly whisked the Governor home, has sadly since been withdrawn. Apparently it cost a packet.

## IN BRIEF

## Redland considering brick sale

Redland confirmed speculation that it was considering selling brick manufacturing operation, but said any deal was not imminent. The building materials group will make an announcement when it has something definite to say. It is also looking into a restructuring of its European roof tile business, where its Gern subsidiary, Braas, is a big contributor to group profits. The proceeds of any sale are expected to be directed to Redland's Eastern tiles operation.

## Suter results 'in line with expectations'

Suter, the diversified industrials group, said yesterday its 11 results before exceptional would be "in line with current market expectations". The company, which recently disposed of a half of other businesses, has decided to close its plastic component manufacturer Clearplas to focus on its core businesses of refrigeration, specialist engineering and chemicals.

## Jefferson Smurfit appoints former PM

Jefferson Smurfit has appointed Albert Reynolds, the former prime minister, as a non-executive director. The paper and packaging group also promoted Raymond Curran from chief financial officer to finance director.

## Scottish shopping mall sold

Pillar Caisse, a joint venture between the property investor a developer Pillar and La Caisse de Depot et Placement du Quebec is buying the Mercat Shopping Mall, in Kirkcaldy, Scotland, for Standard Life. The purchase price of £13.25m will give Pillar Caisse an initial yield of around 10 per cent. Since the joint venture was formed in July 1994 it has spent about £70m building up its property portfolio.

## Henderson profits flat

Henderson Administration, the investment management company said its funds had performed well against industry yardsticks the group's first third-quarter report to shareholders. However, pre-tax profits remained almost flat at £14.9m in the nine months to December on revenue up from £50.8m to £51.5m.

## CentreGold in bid talks

CentreGold, the video games to computer software group, has its shares suspended after it revealed it was in talks about a possible bid for the company. In a statement to the Stock Exchange CentreGold said negotiations were at an advanced stage. It adds that preliminary results for the year to 4 August 1995 would be announced when the discussions ended.

## Bloomsbury among the bestsellers

Bloomsbury Publishing has seen its strongest ever January book sales with three books in the top 10 bestseller lists. It has a signed several promising new titles.

## Marling expands international interests

Marling Industries, the textiles group which also manufactures belt webbing, is expanding its international interests. In the UK it has paid an initial £1.2m for the seat belt business of Woven Electronics with deferred payments of up to £2m to follow. It has acquired a 25 per cent stake in Malaysia's only seat belt manufacturer.

COMPANY RESULTS				
	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
BA (03)	1,800m (1.74bn)	104.0m (80.0m)	42.9p (33.6p)	-
Carroll Property (F)	1.10m (0.82m)	0.25m (0.19m)	6.8p (8.9p)	3.0p (2.5p)
Dalgety (F)	2.10m (2.58m)	69.4m (80.9m)	17.7p (16.9p)	8.5p (6.5p)
Homebrew Adams (H)	51.5m (50.8m)	14.9m (14.8m)	46.54p (46.03p)	-
Novco (F)	22.6m (13.0m)	4.01m (0.85m)	1.94p (0.41p)	nil (nil)
Marling World Group (F)	55.0m (46.8m)	4.01m (4.47m)	18.37p (22.12p)	8.2p (7.7p)
VOC (F)	30.5m (25.7m)	0.73m (0.58m)	28.44p (22.54p)	6.5p (5.9p)
Waste Man Int'l (F)	1.10m (1.12m)	22.1m (1.65m)	4.9p (27.8p)	18 (nil)

(F) - Final (I) - Interim (H) - Half months

## Price destruction becomes a martial art

The whiff of recession is in the air. In the last few days there have been new fears that the US might not manage the "soft landing" from its long expansion, that Germany has already fallen back into recession, and that Japan's recovery will not take place at all. Suddenly there is the prospect of three of the largest economies all heading south at the same time, a synchronised downturn.

One can explain the slowing in the US as a natural and inevitable pause after five years of solid growth.

One can explain the early German downturn, partly at least, by pointing to its tight monetary policy as the Bundesbank continued to correct (or over-correct) the inflationary forces generated by unification. But Germany did at least manage some recovery.

In Japan the experience is different in two respects: it is alone among the world's economies in that it has not really recovered at all; and it is experiencing falling prices. The searing effect of living with falling prices has been such that the expression "price destruction" has been coined to describe it.

Three measures of inflation - or rather price destruction - are shown in the graphs. The GDP deflator - the most representative of the three for it seeks to chart inflation in the whole economy - has been negative for a full year.

Long before that, back at the beginning of 1992, the wholesale price index went below zero, so the business community has had a full four years of coping with falling prices. Consumers, on the other hand, have only started to feel the benefit of this in the last few months, as the relatively inefficient distribution chain has off-set the cuts in prices from the extremely efficient manufacturers.

Getting accustomed to a world of falling prices is quite difficult, as UK home owners have found. One obvious effect has been to make would-be borrowers even more cautious than they might otherwise be. Low interest rates do not therefore boost borrowing, as they might in an inflating economy. Commercial companies are under no pressure to invest; domestic consumers under no pressure to borrow either for consumption or house purchase. Further, low interest rates cut the income of savers and may, on balance, reduce overall demand.

Thus in real terms the latest figures for retail sales show them down 2.5 per cent year on year; household consumption is down 2.4 per cent; and department sales are down 1.8 per cent. But those are in real terms. In nominal terms, the amount of money the retailers are taking in their tills is down even more.

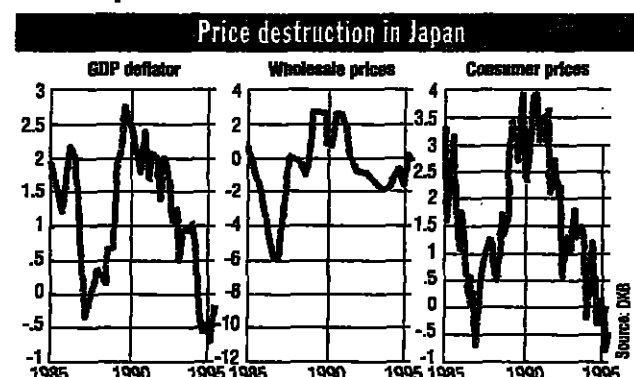
This experience at the shops is paralleled in the economy as



## ECONOMIC VIEW

HAMISH McRAE

a whole. The real economy, the figures that the official world looks at, is up 0.2 per cent year on year. In nominal terms - the yen in your pocket - the economy is down 0.4 per cent. The importance of this is



that debts are in nominal, not real, terms. So indebted companies are not seeing loans whittled away by inflation, but their real burden increase, even if the company can continue to service the debt. It is as though the whole economy has been struck with the British home-buyers' experience of negative equity. On a current basis, and helped by low interest rates,

would-be borrowers are loath to borrow yet more and banks are loath to lend to new customers. Result: the Japanese economy is paralysed, like our housing market.

So what will happen? As always, there is a spread of views, but it is perhaps most helpful to shoe-horn them into two categories. One is the slow haul back; the other, that things have to get worse before they can get better.

The slow-haul-back camp would point to a number of signs of recovery. These include the weaker yen; the change in capital investment from being negative to being flat; and a slight rise in certain categories of consumer spending, such as cars.

The things-get-worse camp would argue that even the present bouncing along the bottom cannot continue for domestic and external reasons. The domestic reasons include the large fiscal deficit, now already 4 per cent of GDP and projected to deteriorate further; falling employment and rising unemployment; and low business confidence, particularly among small firms; and finally the still-unresolved structural weaknesses of the Japanese economy.

Add to these woes, the international concerns, particularly that the world's largest and third-largest economies seem to be turning down together. Recession in the US and Germany would be devastating to Japan.

## 150 jobs lost as Sugar goes ahead with Amstrad revamp

TOM STEVENSON City Editor

Amstrad is to lose 150 jobs as part of the reorganisation that former chief executive David Rogers, who quit just before Christmas, refused to implement. The cuts confirm the threatened slimming down of the loss-making Amstrad Consumer Electronics subsidiary, once the core business but now just one part of a diversified group.

The restructuring of ACE means one of its two divisions, Amstrad Direct, will relocate to the Midlands base of Vignex, the direct sales computer business Amstrad recently acquired. Amstrad Trading, which focuses on indirect retail sales of TVs, videos, satellite and audio equipment, will remain at Amstrad's Brentwood headquarters but in a pared down form.

Alan Sugar, chairman, said yesterday: "The market trend in consumer electronics means only lean organisations can concentrate on their core skills and flourish. This reorganisation puts Amstrad Trading and Amstrad Direct on a sound footing for the future and on an equal basis to their respective competitors."

David Rogers, who was brought into the company 18 months ago with a brief to build up the company's traditional business, resigned after Amstrad abandoned that strategy in favour of becoming a holding company for the acquisitions it has made in recent years. A search for a replacement is under way but an Amstrad spokesman warned that finding the right person might take some time.

Last October, Amstrad revealed that despite Mr Rogers'

best efforts, ACE remained unprofitable, although the group as a whole had returned to the black thanks to the contribution from Vignex. A fuller picture will emerge on Thursday when Amstrad unveils interim figures for the six months to December.

After the departure of Mr Rogers, speculation was revived that Alan Sugar might be planning another bid to return the company he founded to private control. The company has denied a repeat of the buy-back attempt that dragged Mr Sugar into conflict with the City in 1992.

The ousting of Mr Rogers raised fears that Mr Sugar might be reverting to the assertive, hands-on management style that culminated in his failed attempt to buy back the two-thirds of Amstrad he does not already own.



Wielding the axe: Alan Sugar insists that 'only lean organisations will flourish'

هَذَا مِنْ الْأَصْلِ



## market report/shares

## DATA BANK

FT-SE 100  
3746.6 -34.7

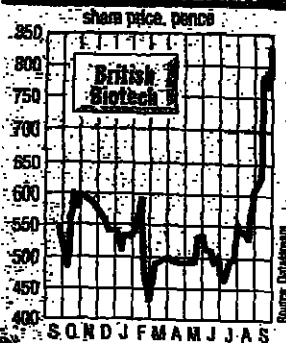
FT-SE 250  
4136.4 -15.8

FT-SE 350  
1864.1 -15.1

SEAQ VOLUME  
656.9m shares,  
36,602 bargains

Gifts Index  
94.19 -0.69

## SHARE SPOTLIGHT



## Bae comes to earth on doubts over Fokker involvement

TAKING STOCK

High-flying British Aerospace came down to earth with a bump. Worries that it could get involved in the rescue of Fokker, the ailing Dutch aircraft group, and cautious comments from Kleinwort Benson lowered the shares 24p to 87.5p.

Kleinwort has regarded Bae as a buy for the past three years. With the shares hitting a peak on Friday the securities group felt obliged to withdraw its buy recommendation.

Kleinwort's negative approach contrasts with other investment houses. There is a strong feeling in many quarters that Bae could, with the Orange mobile telephone flotation likely to provide further inspiration, move even higher.

But it was a poor day for most shares with the stock market suffering its sharpest reverse for seven weeks.

It was almost as if last week's record-breaking heroics had

drained the market's energy. In lacklustre trading the FT-SE 100 index fell 34.7 points to 3,746.6 with the failure of the expected big takeover bid to appear and a dull New York display responsible for much of the damage.

Yet, although the mood was cautious, takeover speculation was not completely snuffed out. British Gas, as bid hopes mingled with talk of management changes, outpaced other blue chips with a 6p move to 244.5p.

Pearson, the banking and media group, put on 15p to 670p on US take over hopes and Mirror Group Newspapers was also drawn into the bid arena with a 4p gain to 195p, a 12 month high.

British Airways' slower traffic growth lowered the shares 19p to 502p and the signalled Orange share sale and Cellnet price reductions depressed Vodafone, off 6.5p to 237.5p.



## MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

Stock market reporter of the year

Standard Chartered, the banking group, lost 14.5p to 635p and Yorkshire Electricity 8p to 744p, as the rumoured bids failed to appear.

Oriel, an insurance broker, did manage to produce a little takeover excitement. Its admission that talks were on justified a 15p gain to 126p. CentreGold was suspended at 37p after its long-running bid talks seemed near fruition.

Bardon, the aggregates group, firmed to 40p despite reported denials from Camas that it was the rumoured bidder. Camas shaded to 83p.

Supermarkets had a cut-price session as profit downgradings wafted around.

Evidence is growing that the current price war is not as phony as some cynics maintain. The four leaders gave ground and Frost, the petrol retailer caught in the cross-fire of the forecourt battle between supermarkets and oil giants, lost a further 9p to 115p, lowest since 1992.

Zeneca recovered some of its poise after Friday's fiasco when at one time the shares were down 70p on wild rumours of problems with its asthma drug. The price firmed 3p to 1.248p.

A presentation at Panmure Gordon, the stockbroker, left MLD Laboratories 18p off at 436p. Smith & Nephew added

2p to 180.5p, rekindling takeover hopes.

Reuters, with an estimated £800m in the bank, fell 9p to 630p despite a revival of stories it plans a share buy-back.

Pan Andean Resources, seeking oil in Bolivia, rose 4p to 36p. The shares were 12.5p last year. Enxet International, a gold miner, added 2p to 14p helped by the firmer gold price. Bakyrchik Gold, seeking the metal in Russia, was also up, 11p to 501p.

Middlesex, the metals group, edged ahead 0.25p to 3.25p as it landed a \$300m deal with Russia's most automated steel works. The link confirms Sir David Alliance's deeper involvement. He will have a 24.5 per cent stake in the Middlesex subsidiary set up to handle the deal. There is talk Middlesex has a more intriguing announcement in the pipeline.

Norcor, a maker of corrugated steel board for the pack-

aging industry, rose 3p to 82p as Australian Pratt Industries picked up a 7.63 per cent shareholding.

Omnicare, a provider of home health-care, held at 84p. Stockbroker Astair & Partners forecast profits of £750,000 next year.

Danka Business Systems, largely US owned, gained 11p to 640p. Ahead of a US offering it is holding investment presentations.

Continental Foods, interim figures tomorrow, gained 6p to 83p.

WT Foods held steady. Formerly called West Trust, the company has a range of overseas foods, particularly Caribbean, Indian and Mexican. There are suggestions that it is involved in talks which could, in effect, lead to a reverse take over by an unquoted food group which has decided to avoid a straightforward share flotation.

□ In a classic marriage of convenience Brackenbridge, the Pronupta bridalwear group, has merged with Langside Hire to create the Formal Group.

The shares, suspended while the deal was stitched together, were heavily traded when dealings resumed yesterday. As part of a rescue refinancing 101.3 million new shares were placed with institutions while others were offered to existing shareholders.

□ A rights issue, perhaps £5m, is thought to be imminent at Toppel Life Sciences, a biotechnology business which has had a difficult time.

The shares were firm yesterday, largely on a tip sheet recommendation. In its last reported full year the company lost £2.4m and there was a £290,000 deficit at its last half-year.

## Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items.

Other details: in Ex-Gratia at Ex-dividend and Ex all UK United Securities Market's Suspended on Partly Paid pm Nt Paid Shares.

Source: Financial.

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For assistance, call our helpline 071 873 4375 (9.30am - 5.30pm).

Calls cost 25p per minute (cheap rate), and 40p at all other times. Call charges include

## Market leaders: Top 20 volumes

Stock	Volume	Stock	Volume	Stock	Volume
British Gas	220,000	Barton	100,000	Termo	70,000
Volvo	200,000	Blue Circle	100,000	BP	70,000
Harman	100,000	ASDA Group	100,000	Dura	70,000
British Steel	100,000	Glaxo Wellcome	100,000	Rolls Royce	70,000
British Airways	100,000	Suez	100,000	Smith & Nephew	70,000

## FT-SE 100 index hour by hour

Open	High	Low	Close
3763.0	3763.0	3763.0	3763.0
3764.4	3764.4	3764.4	3764.4
3765.0	3765.0	3765.0	3765.0

14.00 37534 down 279  
15.00 37448 down 367  
16.00 37619 down 334  
17.00 37504 down 309  
18.00 37580 down 347

<p><b>Alcoholic Beverages</b></p> <p>Guinness 185.00 Heineken 185.00 Kaiser Brewery 185.00 Lagardere 185.00 Pilsener 185.00 Remy 185.00 Tennent 185.00 Vanguard 185.00</p> <p><b>Banking</b></p> <p>Barclays 185.00 HSBC 185.00 Lloyds 185.00 NatWest 185.00 Paragon 185.00 Royal Bank 185.00 Santander 185.00 TSB 185.00</p> <p><b>Chemicals</b></p> <p>ICI 185.00 Imperial Chemical 185.00 Monsanto 185.00 Rohm and Haas 185.00 Shell Chemical 185.00 Solvay 185.00 Vanguard 185.00</p> <p><b>Construction</b></p> <p>Bechtel 185.00 Bovis Lend Lease 185.00 Crest Nicholson 185.00 Hochtief 185.00 Kier 185.00 Mowlem 185.00 Odebrecht 185.00 PCL 185.00</p> <p><b>Electronics</b></p> <p>Amstrad 185.00 Cassidy 185.00 Crest Nicholson 185.00 Hochtief 185.00 Kier 185.00 Mowlem 185.00 Odebrecht 185.00 PCL 185.00</p> <p><b>Engineering</b></p> <p>Alstom 185.00 Barton 185.00 Blue Circle 185.00 BP 185.00 Dura 185.00 Rolls Royce 185.00 Smith &amp; Nephew 185.00 Suez 185.00</p> <p><b>Food</b></p> <p>Asda 185.00 Glaxo Wellcome 185.00 Mars 185.00 Nestle 185.00 Unilever 185.00 Wm Morrison 185.00</p> <p><b>Gas</b></p> <p>British Gas 185.00 Centrica 185.00 E.ON 185.00 Envestra 185.00 SSE 185.00 Vanguard 185.00</p> <p><b>Health Care</b></p> <p>Amgen 185.00 Baxter 185.00 Boehringer Ingelheim 185.00 Eli Lilly 185.00 Glaxo Wellcome 185.00 Novartis 185.00 Pfizer 185.00 Roche 185.00</p> <p><b>Household Goods</b></p> <p>Asda 185.00 Glaxo Wellcome 185.00 Mars 185.00 Nestle 185.00 Unilever 185.00 Wm Morrison 185.00</p> <p><b>Insurance</b></p> <p>Aviva 185.00 Axa 185.00 British Insurance 185.00 Crest Nicholson 185.00 Hochtief 185.00 Kier 185.00 Mowlem 185.00 Odebrecht 185.00</p> <p><b>Investment</b></p> <p>BlackRock 185.00 Fidelity 185.00 Invesco 185.00 M&amp;P 185.00 PIMCO 185.00 Renaissance 185.00 T. Rowe Price 185.00 Vanguard 185.00</p> <p><b>Leisure &amp; Hotels</b></p> <p>Accor 185.00 Barton 185.00 Blue Circle 185.00 BP 185.00 Dura 185.00 Rolls Royce 185.00 Smith &amp; Nephew 185.00 Suez 185.00</p> <p><b>Life Assurance</b></p> <p>Aviva 185.00 Axa 185.00 British Insurance 185.00 Crest Nicholson 185.00 Hochtief 185.00 Kier 185.00 Mowlem 185.00 Odebrecht 185.00</p> <p><b>Media</b></p> <p>Amstrad 185.00 Cassidy 185.00 Crest Nicholson 185.00 Hochtief 185.00 Kier 185.00 Mowlem 185.00 Odebrecht 185.00 PCL 185.00</p> <p><b>Pharmaceuticals</b></p> <p>Amgen 185.00 Baxter 185.00 Boehringer Ingelheim 185.00 Eli Lilly 185.00 Glaxo Wellcome 185.00 Novartis 185.00 Pfizer 185.00 Roche 185.00</p> <p><b>Printing &amp; Paper</b></p> <p>Amstrad 185.00 Cassidy 185.00 Crest Nicholson 185.00 Hochtief 185.00 Kier 185.00 Mowlem 185.00 Odebrecht 185.00 PCL 185.00</p> <p><b>Property</b></p> <p>Amstrad 185.00 Cassidy 185.00 Crest Nicholson 185.00 Hochtief 185.00 Kier 185.00 Mowlem 185.00 Odebrecht 185.00 PCL 185.00</p> <p><b>Retailers</b></p> <p>Asda 185.00 Glaxo Wellcome 185.00 Mars 185.00 Nestle 185.00 Unilever 185.00 Wm Morrison 185.00</p> <p><b>Support Services</b></p> <p>Amstrad 185.00 Cassidy 185.00 Crest Nicholson 185.00 Hochtief 185.00 Kier 185.00 Mowlem 185.00 Odebrecht 185.00 PCL 185.00</p> <p><b>Telecommunications</b></p> <p>Amstrad 185.00 Cassidy 185.00 Crest Nicholson 185.00 Hochtief 185.00 Kier 185.00 Mowlem 185.00 Odebrecht 185.00 PCL 185.00</p> <p><b>Textiles &amp; Apparel</b></p> <p>Amstrad 185.00 Cassidy 185.00 Crest Nicholson 185.00 Hochtief 185.00 Kier 185.00 Mowlem 185.00 Odebrecht 185.00 PCL 185.00</p> <p><b>Transport</b></p> <p>Amstrad 185.00 Cassidy 185.00 Crest Nicholson 185.00 Hochtief 185.00 Kier 185.00 Mowlem 185.00 Odebrecht 185.00 PCL 185.00</p> <p><b>Water</b></p> <p>Amstrad 185.00 Cassidy 185.00 Crest Nicholson 185.00 Hochtief 185.00 Kier 185.00 Mowlem 185.00 Odebrecht 185.00 PCL 185.00</p>	<p><b>Government Securities</b></p> <p>10 Year 185.00 5 Year 185.00 2 Year 185.00 1 Year 185.00 6 Month 185.00 3 Month 185.00 1 Month 185.00</p> <p><b>Index-linked</b></p> <p>10 Year 185.00 5 Year 185.00 2 Year 185.00 1 Year 185.00 6 Month 185.00 3 Month 185.00 1 Month 185.00</p> <p><b>Shorts</b></p> <p>10 Year 185.00 5 Year 185.00 2 Year 185.00 1 Year 185.00 6 Month 185.00 3 Month 185.00 1 Month 185.00</p> <p><b>Mediums</b></p> <p>10 Year 185.00 5 Year 185.00 2 Year 185.00 1 Year 185.00 6 Month 185.00 3 Month 185.00 1 Month 185.00</p> <p><b>Longs</b></p> <p>10 Year 185.00 5 Year 185.00 2 Year 185.00 1 Year 185.00 6 Month 185.00 3 Month 185.00 1 Month 185.00</p>
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## Foreign Exchange Rates

STERLING

Country

Spot

1 month

3 months

US

2307

25-6

25-62

Canada

13101

20-2

20-2

Germany

22820

55-48

638-594

France

22855

123-184

638-594

Italy

22855

123-184

638-594

Japan

9122

77-73

238-226

ECU

12276

95-5

48-43

Hong Kong

90438

64-8

26-81

Denmark

8763

148-08

425-335

Netherlands

23229

68-9

232-250

Sweden

16885

21-6

29-29

Norway

90440

40-48

287-260

Spain

90440

40-48

287-260

Switzerland

19440

68-59

86-86

Australia

22881

16-25

50-59

New Zealand

22881

16-25

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Malaysia

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100-121

Hong Kong

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Singapore

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Kuwait

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DOLLAR

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France

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Kuwait

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OTHER SPOT RATES

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Argentina

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Yemen

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Note: Forward rates quoted here to show how it can be different (although not very much) from the spot rate. For example, the forward rate for the US dollar is 1000, but the spot rate is 1000. The forward rate for the US dollar is 1000, but the spot rate is 1000. The forward rate for the US dollar is 1000, but the spot rate is 1000. The forward rate for the US dollar is 1000, but the spot rate is 1000. The forward rate for the US dollar is 1000, but the spot rate is 1000. The forward rate for the US dollar is 1000, but the spot rate is 1000. The forward rate for the US dollar is 1000, but the spot rate is 1000. The forward rate for the US dollar is 1000, but the spot rate is 1000. The forward rate for the US dollar is 1000, but the spot rate is 1000. The forward rate for the US dollar is 1000, but the spot rate is 1000. The forward rate for the US dollar is 1000, but the spot rate is 1000. The forward rate for the US dollar is 1000, but the spot rate is 1000. 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## sport

## Justin Thomas should be forgiven his mistake against England and be encouraged to run rather than kick at the opposition

Why do British sides persist in giving away possession? Twice I have heard Wayne Sheffield, the great New Zealand No 8, ask this question. On the first occasion it was at a post-match press conference at Twickenham. On the second it was at a rugby dinner in central London. It was clearly something about which he felt strongly.

Possession, he told us, was a precious commodity, the most valuable in the game. He might have been the late and largely unlamented Shah of Iran talking about oil, and denouncing the Western world for wasting it.

The form of waste which Sheffield had in mind was quite clear. He was not referring to a loss of possession in ruck or maul, on one's own throw into the line-out or even on

one's own put-in to the scrum. That could happen to anyone, though strikes against the head are becoming increasingly rare. No, Sheffield was referring specifically to kicks downfield which were made in the vague hope that something would come of them, but which succeeded merely in handing the ball over to the other side.

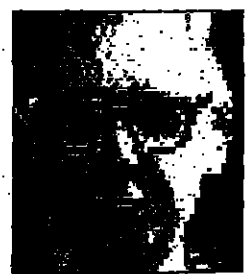
I kept thinking of his words as I watched the England and Wales match on Saturday. This time I was not in the press box but in a seat high in the West Stand. Accordingly the pattern of play was rendered more emphatically, even if some of the detail (later recovered by my video recorder) may have been lost.

Kevin Bowring, the Welsh coach, is clearly an intelligent man. But I do not think the style he imposed

on the Welsh side and, in particular, on Justin Thomas was specially clever. Time and again the Welsh full-back kicked the ball upfield in the general direction of Mike Catt, in the expectation that Catt would make a mess of things.

In view of Catt's recent form for England, this was not a wholly unreasonable hope. Why Jack Rowell, if he really wants to play the sort of rugby he claims to want, does not recall Paul Hull – the most unjustly treated player in the whole of England – continues to puzzle me. This, however, is not the point at issue.

Catt generally would make a mess of it, to the extent of failing to find touch. Justin Thomas would then proceed to catch the ball (once he knocked on badly) and put in a repeat performance, hoofing it



ALAN WATKINS  
on rugby

upfield. Catt would finally find a poor touch.

What was the object of the exercise? It was, we are told, not only to "put pressure on Catt" but also to "keep the game away from the English forwards". Wales are fortunate

that Catt is no Serge Blanco, though last season he hinted that he might turn out to be one. Blanco would have set up or himself scored several times. Catt failed to do this. And all Wales did was throw – or, rather, kick – away possession.

Thomas was chosen as an attacking full-back whose greatest strength was his speedy and elusive running. In fact I thought he was about to embark on a frolic of his own when he started to run from behind his own line rather than touch down or kick more or less immediately. Instead he moved up to his own 22 only to put in a low kick which Jeremy Guscott charged down; the rest we know.

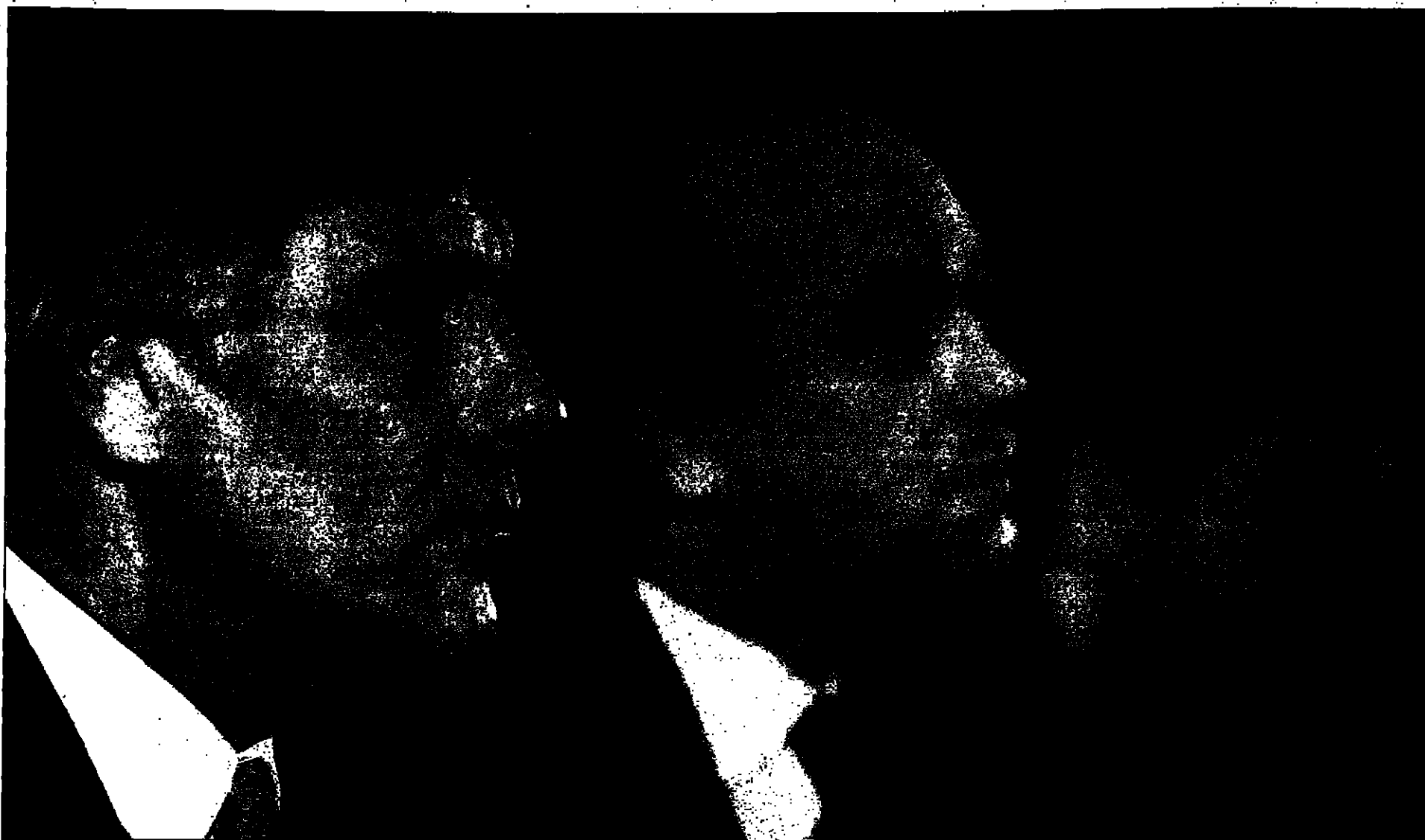
Barry John has suggested in what we old journalists have been taught to call Another Newspaper

that Justin Thomas should be replaced by Mike Rayer. Certainly Rayer is another unlucky player, almost as unlucky as Hull. Nevertheless I think Thomas should be forgiven his mistake and encouraged to run rather than kick at the opposition.

John has also suggested that Nigel Davies should be replaced at inside centre by Neil Jenkins. I am more sympathetic to this, though not because he had a specially bad game. It was not as good a game as that enjoyed by his outside centre, Leigh Davies, whose strong running made Hemi Taylor's try and who looks like being in the Welsh side for a decade. Still, Nigel Davies put in some good tackles. I would none the less bring back Jenkins as a three-quarter. He is a more reliable place

kicker than Arwel Thomas, and his presence would take some of the weight off Thomas's shoulders.

If Robert Howley was the man then, in a game that is losing its exuberance and individuality, Arwel Thomas was the personality of the match. I am not sure what Geoff Cooke had in mind when he said afterwards that Thomas was a bit among men. If he meant that the new Welsh outside-half played in an immature way, he was manifestly wrong. If, however, he meant that Thomas looked even younger than his 21 years, like a waif from a Victorian orphanage, he was clearly right. Long may there be a place in rugby for someone of 5ft 8in and 10st 10lb – though he might not get into any side run by the muscle-obsessed Cooke.



Front man: Cliff Brittle, the new man at the top of the RFU, is joined by Tony Hallett and Will Carling at Twickenham's top table yesterday

Photograph: David Ashdown

## Invader Brittle predicts peace

Cliff Brittle, the man who you could say broke the Rugby Football Union, yesterday sat at the Twickenham top table and announced that the RFU's second attempt at a special general meeting on the passing of amateurism would bring peace in our time.

Brittle is the parvenu from the Isle of Man who shocked the establishment by trouncing the RFU committee's own nomination – and the unanimous choice of its executive committee – to be chairman of that self-same executive. Last Friday he therefore presided for the first time over men who had been as one in opposing to him.

The first sign having been abandoned in chaos without a

single word's debate on the report of the RFU commission which had been supposed to be its centrepiece, the RFU is planning another back where it all began at the Birmingham International Convention Centre on 24 March. That happens to be Passion Sunday.

"I see no problem at all," Brittle said yesterday. "No one has ever said to me one word against the top end being paid, and they want to see the top end of the game being successful. The game is an open game but we don't know some of the questions left alone the answers. Some people will want to be paid to play and some parts will want to remain as they are."

Brittle, a 54-year-old retired

businessman who has represented Staffordshire on the Union since 1989, beat John Jeavons-Fellows, one of the RFU's International Board delegates, by 647 votes to 332 at the aborted sgm on 14 January. The important support of the counties was seen as a defiant gesture against the stridency with which the big clubs were demanding special treatment (ie more money from the RFU) in order to cope with professionalism.

However, yesterday Brittle, who once played for Sale and also coached his native county, ventured that his discussions with Peter Wheeler of Leicester, prime mover in the English First Division clubs, had been encouraging. Moreover, he assured these clubs that urgently finalising the new professional dispensation was his priority. "Since the decision of the International Board in August to go open, the top end of the game has serious problems," Brittle said. "These have to be resolved and we have to pay attention to these problems now and not later on. There's no question the speed of decision-making has to be improved immensely. There is no way the national clubs can wait two or three months for a decision from the Rugby Union."

Brittle said of his first executive meeting: "I was satisfied with the outcome and I'm confident that it will all settle down very soon." On the other hand, neither Bill Bishop, the RFU president (who tried to dissuade Brittle from standing), nor Jeavons-Fellows was present at Twickenham yesterday as would normally have been the case hitherto. Next up for Brittle is to meet members of the RFU commission on Thursday to discuss their report.

The RFU is readying itself to fight a definitive legal action on the International Board's 180-day residential requirement for players moving countries. Legal advice taken by the union runs counter to that given to the IB as it affects the players of the home unions as well as other European Union nationals. "All our advice is that it would not be sustainable," Tony Hallett, the RFU secretary, said at Twickenham yesterday. "It would be a restraint of trade on a professional moving from one country to another." The RFU is hoping the home unions and others in the EU will reach mutual agreement in accordance with the IB's get-out clause. As it is, there will be no bar on Nick Popplewell, the Ireland prop, turning out for Newcastle against Harlequins in the Pilkington Cup on Saturday.

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## Teddington buoyed by draw

## Hockey

Teddington's manager, Neil Campbell, was a satisfied man on hearing their home draw against Canterbury in the quarter-final of the Hockey Association Cup, writes Bill Colwill. "Realistically, to qualify for a second year in Europe our aim must be to win the cup. I will be looking forward to playing them

with a full side," he said yesterday. Canterbury's manager, Graeme MacDonald, was less enthusiastic: "Not impossible," he said, "but we would have preferred a home draw."

Guildford, the cup holders, entertain Reading, while the National League leaders, Southampton, travel to Old Loughtonians. HA Cup Quarter-finals: Havant v East Grinstead; Guildford v Reading; Old Loughtonians v Southampton; Teddington v Canterbury. (Ties to be played Saturday 16 March).

## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

In their current form, Leeds United may count themselves lucky that the Birmingham City side they meet in the Coca-Cola Cup semi-final on Sunday is not of the calibre of the one Bob Hutton represented 24 years ago. Among those alongside the much-travelled striker in their 1972 FA Cup semi-final against Leeds were Kenny Burns, Gordon Taylor, Bob Latchford, and Trevor Francis. Leeds won 3-0 but then they were at the zenith of their powers.

Hutton's, nine-club career peaked at Birmingham, where he scored 58 of his 222 League goals. It ended 12 years ago at Cardiff. "I decided to call it a day at 36," he said. "I wanted to get out with at least some semblance of respectability." Nowadays, after a fashion, he plays for another Gordon Taylor team, visiting clubs on behalf of PFA Financial Management, alongside Vince O'Keefe, Des Bremner and Dave "super sub" Fairclough. "We were all recruited from the financial services



Bob Hutton

industry," Hutton said. "We try to see as many players as possible to give advice on pensions and financial planning."

Hutton, who worked on building sites and the docks as a young man in Hull, received comparatively little advice. "My life has been a sequence of lucky breaks," he said. "I was introduced to insurance while I was still playing. When I finished I was able to start full-time immediately." He doubles as an expert summariser for BBC Radio WM and will be at St Andrews on Sunday in that capacity.

Jon Cutley

## Housewife pins faith in her motley crew

A gauntlet was thrown down bravely in one of the bastions of yacht racing yesterday by a "housewife and mother" from Eastbourne. Speaking at the Royal Thames Yacht Club in Knightsbridge, Jacky MacGillivray promised of the Sussex Challenge for the 1997-98 Whitbread Round the World Race: "We will be prepared both mentally and physically to take on the rest of the world and come out on top."

The announcement comes at a time when the Whitbread as a whole is seeking to reinject some momentum, particularly in terms of top-level contestants, when Britain could do with its own fully professional campaign, and when the rival Grand Mistral Race, scheduled to start this September, is reaching crunch point on its own line-up.

The 42-year-old MacGillivray, whose husband is part of

the crew and is project director, refused to disclose how much of the nearly £3m needed for the project has so far been committed. She has some support from Bupa International, the private health insurer, though they see this as a local, rather than international, initiative.

That, at least, means the challenge is buying a boat. They have chosen the 1993-94 contender from Ukraine, Hetman Sahaladachny, subject to survey and title provenance, which came a poor seventh. MacGillivray admits that the



yacht is rather on the heavy side, but feels that its potential has not yet been realised and that she has spotted winning potential. "It's a super hull," she said.

In addition, she is saying that the challenge can make it to the start line in September 1997, which implies that she also has commitments for the £250,000 entry fee needed to

take part. Assuming the yacht was bought for a maximum of £200,000, the further budget necessary to maintain it for 18 months, make modifications, develop sails, build new sails for each of the legs and send them to the stopovers in a workshop container means a budget already pushing towards £1m.

Bupa's representative, Neil

Horseman, refused to confirm that his firm was putting in anything like £1m. Other support has so far been confined to local companies, the Eastbourne College of Arts and Technology, and a link to the charity Business Against Drugs.

Sussex Challenge's chairman, Nikolai Askaroff, a food company boss and accountant, conceded that he is looking for an additional £2m. For that he may have to look beyond Sussex, despite the availability of big company budgets at Gatwick and Brighton.

What neither he, nor Bupa, nor the other emissaries from Sussex, seemed to have any doubt about was MacGillivray's dream of her amateurs taking on opponents in a race that has developed from sporting endeavour and adventure into a full-blooded ocean grand prix contested by skippers and crews of the highest calibre.

Her own crew list references to a former who joined "because nothing better to do" and a hairdresser whose include swimming and ing. Other crew picked because of the record of success in yachting, rather than record of success in yachting.

So why had she chosen to tilt at the Challenge, specific for amateurs who themselves, and sailing the wrong world?

She poured some idea. "The BT give any advance days, who wants to rel.," she said. "I discover bread is the price a full not for wimp."

TODAY'S FIXTURES	
<b>Football</b>	<b>THIRD DIVISION</b>
7.30 unless stated	Derby v Sheffield Wednesday
<b>FA CUP FOURTH ROUND</b>	Derby v Sheffield Wednesday
Derby v Sheffield Wednesday (7.45)	Derby v Sheffield Wednesday (7.45)
Derby v Sheffield Wednesday (7.45)	Derby v Sheffield Wednesday (7.45)
<b>ENGLISH INSURANCE LEAGUE</b>	<b>SECOND DIVISION</b>
Blackpool v Barnsley	Blackpool v Barnsley
Blackpool v Barnsley (7.45)	Blackpool v Barnsley (7.45)
Blackpool v Barnsley (7.45)	Blackpool v Barnsley (7.45)
<b>THIRD DIVISION</b>	<b>THIRD DIVISION</b>
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Blackpool v Barnsley (7.45)	Blackpool v Barnsley (7.45)
Blackpool v Barnsley (7.45)	Blackpool v Barnsley (7.45)

Rugby League	
7.00 unless stated	7.00 unless stated
<b>THIRD DIVISION</b>	<b>THIRD DIVISION</b>
Blackpool v Barnsley	Blackpool v Barnsley
Blackpool v Barnsley (7.45)	Blackpool v Barnsley (7.45)
Blackpool v Barnsley (7.45)	Blackpool v Barnsley (7.45)



Photograph: P/

**Football**  
**GUY HODGSON**

The Football Association of Ireland announced McCarthy's appointment after Kenny

"I can't talk about the people I am considering bringing in with me," he said, "because some of them are currently in jobs at clubs, but it will be resolved fairly soon and the appointments will be my decision."

Ironically, Bassett, the former Wimbledon manager who was replaced by Howard Kendall at Sheffield United, was one of those linked with the Republic of Ireland vacancy. Mike

"It is a tough act for anybody to follow with a line-up of previous Millwall managers including George Graham. John

fresh impetus we are in with a good chance of being involved in the final shake up at the end of the First Division season. Everything we do will be aimed towards that.

personal note I am sad that I am losing a manager whom I admire enormously and a friend. He brings to his new job great qualities, particularly in the area of decency and integrity. As far as a new appointment is con-

The Football Association of Ireland is trying to negotiate a parting settlement with Maurice Setters, who did that job and Jack Charlton.

dent, Ockie Oosthuizen, said: "We do not get the money we want, we be forced to liquidate. Believe me, if that is allowed to happen, the rugby league will never be played in South Africa again."

The World Cup director

## Asprilla deal 'still on'

dition. "When a footballer plays at top level like Asprilla he is bound to take knocks but that doesn't mean he's injured," the lawyer said. He said contacts with Newcastle were continuing, adding: "I think we can still reach an agreement without any price cut."

## Rare English sympathy for Australians

# sympathy for Australians

## Cricket

England yesterday sympathised

with Australia's World Cup plight, while expressing complete satisfaction over their own security arrangements in Lahore.

Ray Illingworth and his squad have been following news as best they can from

News that Australia had decided not to go to Sri Lanka in the wake of last week's Colombo bombing came as no real surprise.

prise. But the fear of Australia's captain, Mark Taylor, that they could be kicked out of the World Cup shocked Illingworth. "Such an outcome would devalue the whole competition," Illingworth said. "But I don't see

"If their game against Sri Lanka cannot be rescheduled elsewhere then the obvious alternative is for them to forfeit it, but play the rest of the Group A matches in India as

"You have to feel sympathy for Australia. It would have been a difficult situation for us if we had been going to Colombo after what happened there last week. In addition, some of their players

Measures to protect England include armed soldiers in their hotel and a heavy military presence around the park and where Mike Atherton

**Ice hockey**  
**NHL:** Tampa Bay 5 Buffalo 2; Vancouver 4 Winnipeg 2; NY Islanders 5 Dallas 3; Chicago 4 Anaheim 1.  
**BRITISH LEAGUE Premier Division (Sunday):** Cardiff Devils 8 Newcastle Warriors 4; Durham Wasps 9 Fife Flyers 6; Milton Keynes Kings 1 Humberstone Hawks 3; Slough Jets 7 Basingstoke 1.

**Motor racing**

**MESA ROULET 24-HOUR RACE (Daytime):** J. Taylor, S. Sharp, J. Pace (all US) Oldsmobile and S-MW-8, 697 laps, 103-324 mph; 2 G. Moretti, M. Paces (both It.), B. Wolfek (Fr.), D. Theys (Ge), Ferard 333SP, 697; 3 J. Downard, B. Hamlet, McAdam, B. Woodell (all US) Mazda Kuzus DLM 649. Selected: 15 D. Marshall, S. Marshall (both US), M. Knead, R. Chambers (both Gt. Brit.) Barchin

**Rugby League**  
**GREAT BRITAIN ACADEMY** (v France, Crawley Park, Hudd, today, 7.30); D Cantello; R Smyth (both Wigan); W Flynn (Wakefield); N McIvor (Salford Reds); D Arnold (St Helens); C Kitchin

**Rugby Union**  
SCOTLAND DEVELOPMENT SIDE vs New Zealand

Snow reports		
Resort	Conditions (Lower)	Conditions (Upper)
<b>ALPSTRIA</b>		
Alpbach.....	fair	powdery

Ischgi .....	hard	powdery
Obergung .....	good	packed
<b>FRANCE</b>		
Chamonix .....	patchy	powdery
Risoul .....	packed	powder
Val Thorens .....	packed	powder
<b>ITALY</b>		
Madesimo .....	powdery	powdery

Bonito	.....icy	powdery
Sazon d'Oink	.....peaked	powdery
<b>SWITZERLAND</b>		
Gründschmid	.....hard	good
Verbier	.....thin	good
<b>NORWAY</b>		
Gelle	.....good	good
<b>SCOTLAND</b>		

Cairngorm .....	thin	limited
Glenishee .....	limited	thin
<b>UNITED STATES &amp; CANADA</b>		
Beaver Creek .....	powder	powder
Taos .....	powder	powder

10%	5.2	snow	snow
20%	5.2	snow	snow
100%	4.2	clear	cloudy
60%	4.2	snow	cloudy

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